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CATHOLIC PREACHERS
OF TO-DAY



1917

CATHOLIC PREACHERS OF TO-DAY

SEVENTEEN SERMONS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL BOURNE



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INTRODUCTION

I HAVE been asked to write a few words of preface to this collection of sermons of *Catholic Preachers of To-day*. I do not think that I can do this better than by printing the summary of my own address in Westminster Cathedral on Easter Day. Therein is the foundation of all our preaching: namely, the claim to set forth God's truth by commission from Himself under the sure guardianship of the official teaching of His Church. Whether it be a Cardinal who preaches, or a simple priest; be it a member of a religious order trained in lengthy leisure for his task, or one of the pastoral clergy over-burdened by the daily cares of his charge, the message is the same however differently it may be delivered. A preacher may be very eloquent and easily hold the attention of his audience, or he may be halting in speech and weary in delivery. If he be a Catholic preacher his doctrine will be the same, and he will speak in full consciousness that he is acting not in his own name, but as an evangelist with a definite message to deliver in the name of Christ our Lord. Every sermon in this interesting collection is a proof varied but irresistible of the attitude of the Catholic Church where preaching is concerned.

FRANCIS CARDINAL BOURNE,
Easter, 1928. Archbishop of Westminster.

BY HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL BOURNE.

“ For this was I born, and for this came I into the world that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”—John xviii, 37.

EASTER is the great festival of the triumph of truth. Our Divine Master, according to His own declaration, came into the world to teach truth to mankind. Men left to the exercise of their purely human means of ascertaining truth had gone lamentably astray. Whether in the intellectual or in the moral order they had embraced every kind of error and corruption. Divinities had been multiplied beyond numbering in order to satisfy the innate longing of the human soul for some being to look up to, and to worship and adore. The divinities thus fashioned were made in the likeness of their fashioner ; and, instead of setting forth high ideals worthy of imitation, they reproduced the whims and vices of degenerate humanity. Even the chosen people of God, while they did not actually abandon their belief in and worship of the one true God, debased their worship of Him and obscured its moral efficacy by detailed interpretations which contradicted His real teaching.

It was into a world so constituted that Jesus

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Christ, true God and true man came in God's appointed time. And He came with this precise object, to teach men definite truth about their Maker and about themselves ; to make them understand the purpose of their lives and how to attain it ; how to know, love and serve their Creator here in their life on earth, in order to be united with Him for all eternity in heaven. This was Our Lord's mission, and He made it perfectly clear to those who were prepared to listen to Him. He was not concerned merely with making them better ; but He would make them better by basing their lives on definite truth about God and about themselves. And He gave ocular proof that He was teaching truth by the miracles which He wrought, and above all by the stupendous miracle which the whole Christian world commemorates to-day.

He declared boldly and unhesitatingly that He was the Son of God, come upon earth to teach truth ; that His enemies would for a moment prevail against Him ; that He would be put to a cruel and ignoble death ; and that He would on the third day rise again from the dead. The historic fact of the Resurrection is the proof to all time of the truth of the Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the truth of His teaching. It is His own supreme and complete testimony of truth.

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But His work was to continue, and He made provision for its continuance. Having risen from the dead and thus given His own chosen testimony of truth, He sent forth men to speak in His name. He declared to them that He sent them even as He Himself had been sent by the Father ; that they were to teach *all* nations *all* that He had taught them ; and that He would be with them, in this their divinely entrusted mission, all the while even to the very end of the world.

In other words He set up a definite organization to do for all time throughout the whole world the very thing which He came upon earth to do. That organization thus set up by Jesus Christ Our Lord we call the Catholic Church. The one purpose then of the Catholic Church is to give testimony to truth. That is the one reason of her existence. She exists for no other purpose. Like her Divine Founder she will strive to make men better, but she will do so only by offering for their acceptance a true knowledge of their Creator and of themselves.

From this it follows that there must be in existence a definite revelation of Divine truth, and that such definite revelation must be capable of being definitely ascertained by men. The Catholic Church has always unhesitatingly proclaimed this double fact ; and she further claims that in her lies the source whence this definite revelation may be

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definitely ascertained. Any ecclesiastical organization that hesitates to make such a claim stands thereby clearly self-confessed as *not* being the Catholic Church.

If the Catholic Church has made this claim continuously through the centuries since the Apostles and their successors began to teach in the security of their Divine commission, it is clear that in the Church there must be a most sure safeguard of the truth entrusted to her keeping by her Divine Founder.

The mind of man is ever active, and no truth can be discovered by him or presented for his acceptance without his mind at once setting to work upon it and endeavouring to draw from it further truths enclosed within it, or flowing logically from it. The matter for investigation may be purely natural or it may be revealed ; it may be the object of man's unaided reason, or some truth beyond the ken of human capacity. But in either case the mind of man will work upon it unceasingly, investigating till it knows more, and then further exploring in the hope of finding still more hidden treasure. This is the root cause of all intellectual and scientific progress.

Thus in the presence of revealed truth the human mind cannot possibly remain inactive. Indeed, on account of its special character, and the appeal which it inevitably makes to mind and heart alike, revealed

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truth must be ever subject to an investigation far exceeding that bestowed upon any other object of human enquiry. There can, of course, be no new revelation. There has been none since the days of the Apostles. But the matter once revealed is so vast and so deep that the minds and the hearts of the very best of men dwell lovingly upon it, and can never be satisfied. How shall they thus investigate and not be led astray, substituting their own human speculations for the truth revealed by God. In all other sciences we trace mistakes and errors innumerable ; moments when the learned have had to retrace long journeys to take up again research at a point where it was deflected from the right path. New theories displace old hypotheses. The teaching of the day flatly contradicts the teachers of the past.

How is it that, in sharp contrast to all other teaching in the history of the world, the Catholic Church proclaims that in her *authoritative* teaching of the Divine revelation entrusted to her, there is not and there cannot be contradiction between the present and the past. The Church encourages her children to study this revelation and to investigate it in every possible way. She sets up Seminaries and Theological Faculties for this very purpose, and she does so fearlessly, for she believes that her Divine Founder has assured to her in her corporate capacity, and to her visible Head individually a

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special guardianship and protection which shall ever effectually prevent her *authoritative* teaching of to-day being in contradiction with her *authoritative* teaching of the past. This is what is meant by the infallibility of the Church or of the Holy Father. Can anyone imagine or suggest a simpler method of securing the definite ascertainment of the definite revelation of which we spoke at the beginning? Failing such method, there can be no security: failing security, there would be no Catholic Church, and the Founder's promise would be void.

We might trace the ever developing teaching of the Catholic Church and show how many things are taught and accepted explicitly to-day which in the past were hardly adverted to or only very dimly apprehended. But if they be part of the formal teaching of the Church, they do not and cannot contradict the doctrine held from the beginning, however much they may expand, clarify and elucidate it. Thus God has in His goodness very wonderfully made provision for our intellectual and spiritual wants. He has bestowed upon us a wonderful knowledge of Himself and of His dealings with our souls. He has not forbidden us, yea rather He has encouraged us to dwell upon this knowledge with the keenest and most loving contemplation. And in the watchful guidance of His Church He has given a protection whereby the human mind, always apt

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to go astray, is saved from so straying in those things which He has been pleased to make known to us in Jesus Christ His Son Our Lord.

Easter Day is full of subjects and motives of thanksgiving. For no gift should we thank our Master more than for this prerogative of inerrancy and infallibility bestowed upon the official teaching of the Church which is thus unceasingly giving witness to the truth in His name. By His mercy we are the members of that Church, secured by that membership in our hold upon the truth which He came on earth to teach. As we thank Him from our hearts, our resolve must be to live in accordance with that truth so generously committed to our care. Like Him, and like His Church, we must be able honestly in our measure to proclaim: "For this was I born, for this came I into the world, to give testimony to the truth."

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THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST
HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL O'CONNELL.

I

“THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST AND THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD.”

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GOD created man in the beginning according to His own image. Gazing in divine contemplation upon His essence, He saw there the countless millions of possible things that by one act of His Supreme Will might spring into existence obedient to his irresistible fiat. Each of these would be of necessity an imitation, though feeble and inadequate, of that which can never be equalled. Everything that exists or can exist, the towering mountain or the gently sloping vale, the sweeping impetuous torrent or the smooth-gliding rivulet, the soaring eagle or the timid dove, the fierce and powerful beast of prey or the gentle, trembling lamb, although different in character and habit, though varying in form and figure, all embody, all proclaim, in some degree and manner, the power, the strength, the beauty, the gentleness of their Almighty Creator.

Everything which in His Might God has made, must bear the impress of His touch, and the higher in the scale of creation the closer the image, until man comes, the noblest and most perfect creature, a little world in himself, and to God assimilated more closely than aught else terrestrial. As the potter

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fashions the clay in accordance with the ideal existing in his own mind, so God moulded humanity according to the concept pre-existing from all eternity, in His infinite intelligence. At the touch of the Divine Artificer man sprang from dust to life, a living image of God ; and this primal resemblance each man forever bears, for as it came with creation, and is inseparable from it, it can be destroyed only by annihilation.

There is, however, another likeness which is not inevitable, which comes not with creation alone, which depends not only on God's pleasure, but in a great measure upon our choice. It is that likeness by which we are made conformable to Jesus Christ by Whom we were redeemed. It is that likeness which God's grace creates in us, and which as a seal He stamps upon all those, reborn by baptism, who by their actions and lives show themselves faithful followers of His Beloved Son, the exemplar of humanity.

By this conformity alone salvation is possible : by it the just are distinguished from the unjust. It elevates man to the Divinity : the absence of it marks him as not of the children of God. In a word, this likeness is the pledge of God's acceptance. With it we are everything : without it we are nothing. With it we are of heaven : without it we are merely of earth. We are destined for heaven : we are all called to be God's friends, not enemies, to partake of the fountains of God's Mercy, not of His Justice. We are destined to carry this likeness in our souls ; and if we have it not, the

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reason is not that God's seal is not ready to mark its impress upon our souls, but because the world has already set upon us its stamp. Where the world rules, God cannot. Either God or the world, but never both. Either God or Mammon is our master ; we cannot serve both. Either the spirit of Christ must animate our souls and inform our actions, or the spirit of the world must deaden and corrupt them. It is for us to choose.

These two influences are not hard to discern. Each has its distinguishing marks : each its individual characters. Let us compare them then, and thus ascertain which is our choice and by which we are ruled.

To be ruled by the spirit of Christ is to be led by the divine impulse along the " narrow way " which leads to Eternal Life. To be ruled by the spirit of the world is to be hurried along the broad and easy road, which leads to destruction. Surely the possession of one or the other of these spirits, these principles of action, God's or the world's, cannot be to any of us a matter of indifference. It is worthy of our most serious deliberation. Let us examine our souls ; let us search our conscience with the light of faith and see whether it is true of us, as, according to St. Paul, it should be,—“ We have not received the spirit of the world but the spirit which is of God.”

“ By their fruits ye shall know them,” says our Lord. By a man's works and actions ; by the influence he exerts ; by the thousand and one signs of the impression he creates we gather the

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quality, the source of that spirit which directs his life. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good : and an evil man out of an evil treasure bringeth forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Luke vi, 45). Such is the decision of Divine Truth.

The controlling spirit is made manifest by its works. Disregard for God's laws, opposition to His commandments, preference for temporal before spiritual things, is an infallible sign of the presence of the spirit of the world. To cherish evil thoughts, corrupt desires, malicious feelings, perverse sentiments, is to have the spirit of evil. When, on the contrary, the mind is ruled by truth, the heart by good ; when the intelligence is governed by God's law, and the heart runs in the way of His commandments, the spirit of Christ rules in us ; we show we are possessed by the Spirit of God, not by that of the world.

There are only two classes, to one or other of which we must belong. We are either Christ's friends or His enemies. "He that is not with me, is against me ; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth." Of which class are we ? What are the characteristics of each ?

The first mark of Christ's followers, of those ruled by His Spirit, is a spirit of recollection, of retirement. "With desolation is the whole earth made desolate because there is none that considereth in his heart." There is the divinely proclaimed cause of all the evils, sins, and moral crimes which

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flood the world—"because no man considereth in his heart."

I do not now speak of that formal separation from the world, that privilege of retirement from its din and clamour which belongs to the vocation to the cloister. I am concerned only with that moral separation possible to and incumbent upon all Christians. God has placed us in this world to fulfil the designs of His Providence ; and in the world we must work out our salvation. But *in* it, we simply may not be *of* it. This is the detachment which marked the Christians of the primitive ages. It is that by which in later times holy kings and princes kept themselves pure and humble amid the blandishments of courts and the corruption of flatterers, and the pomp of the world. It is a separation which envelops the soul and cloisters it from the noise and confusion of worldly pleasures, aims and interests, and makes it possible for it to hear and recognize the still, small voice of God. We are here to do God's will, and it is only by recollectedness that we can hear God's voice. Retirement of soul is the state in which we learn His commands. This, then, is the first mark of God's children. This is the first characteristic of the Spirit of Christ.

From this recollection and reflection must come a knowledge of self ; and self-knowledge is necessary to all vital religion. No other knowledge can make up for it. Without it all other knowledge may be only a snare. From recollectedness and self-knowledge comes the realization of the necessity of

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penance. For knowing what we are in very truth, and what we should be according to justice, and comparing the elevation of grace and the perfection to which we should aspire, and which God demands of us, with the knowledge of our innumerable sins and offences, our defiance of the law of God, our "trampling under foot the Son of God, and counting the Blood of His Testament an unholy thing," how can we but conclude that punishment must wipe away such stains, and penance undo what self-will and self-indulgence have done amiss?

Hence penance is the necessary outcome of reflection, the second characteristic of the Spirit of Christ, as wilfulness and license are of the spirit of the world.

There is significance in the ensign under which a soldier fights. The banner that leads him to battle speaks to him of the spirit in which he must fight. Over the ranks of the Roman legions flew the eagle with wings spread towards the enemy, and rapacious beak open as if about to make them his prey. They fought for empire, and the eagle led them to booty. The Cross is our standard. It stands ever on our altars laden with the Sacred Body of our God. Look, then, upon your crucifix and learn what it teaches. Is it thirst for wealth, or fame, or fortune? No! Suffering, self-denial, mortification are the only thoughts it inspires. "Take up thy cross and follow Me" are the words of our Crucified King. He, like the eagle, stretches out His arms, as though flying upon the spoil; but the spoil is human hearts, the bodies and souls

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of those whom He redeemed, for whom He died. It was by His Death and Suffering, His Cross and Passion, that He redeemed them. Therefore the Cross always speaks to us of the price of His victory and our Redemption, and of the cost of all victory and all redemption in His Kingdom. We are the subjects of a King who died on the Cross "that He might win us to God"; and He has chosen the Cross as His standard, that we may learn that we too must die on a cross to keep ourselves God's. There is no other way.

For us penance is, then, a necessity, not a choice. By penance alone is the foul blot of sin erased; by penance alone is grace regained; by penance alone our lost heritage is recovered; by penance alone is hell avoided and the foretaste of heaven restored.

O holy penance, companion of the man God, nurse and mother of Charity, safeguard and counsellor of purity, defender of innocence, sweet guide to Paradise, what wonders hast thou wrought in the human soul. Let Magdalen, and Peter, and Augustine testify what power thou hast, what divine transformations thou hast wrought when innocence had fled. From sinners they became saints; from enemies, friends; from outcasts, children! This wonderful change, this ineffable transformation of wolf into lamb is the effect of penance. What words can speak the praises of so powerful a virtue!

Self-indulgence, self-will, intellectual pride, even more than unbridled passion, have been the ruin of the human race. By these fell the first man; and by these has fallen every man since then.

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But penance has achieved more than these have destroyed. It has recreated sinful man, raised him from the dust by making him capable of Divine grace, and "a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Hence, beloved brethren, this beautiful virtue is another mark of the Spirit of Christ. Let the world mock at the fleetness of time, and seek to bury the remorse of sin in dissipation and pleasure. Let it drown the voice of conscience in the discordant music of self-indulgence, but we who have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit of Christ will remember His bidding, "Take up thy cross and follow Me."

Our standard the Cross we shall follow wherever it leads. It will be through trials and sufferings in this world, but we are certain that these passed, it will bring us finally to victory in "the kingdom of Christ and of God."

Recollection and Penance. Behold the two characteristics of the children of God. Behold the watchwords of our warfare and life. Behold the conditions of winning the eternal life. Do we realize their meaning? Do we comprehend their necessity? Do we at least desire to live them? If we do, then we are of the Spirit of Christ; we bear His character; we possess what will conform us to His Image. But if these be not ours let us beware; for "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His," says the apostle.

"The spirit of the world," or "the spirit which is of God"—we must have one or the other. It

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remains with us to choose. God grant us so to be led by the Holy Spirit that we may no longer be "under the law" of sin and death.

"To live is to learn" is a proverb, the true import of which few of us realize. Human life is a study. The world is but the little classroom where men by every act and word are striving to copy upon the book of time their own biography. What that task is, what its success, must be determined by one fixed standard, the sole criterion of all that is of value in the man. "Ideals rule the world." If the model of the artist is poor, the artist's skill must fail. If the copy is blurred or the letters badly formed, the child whose hand repeats them must be only a poor penman. Men are imitators. The children of to-day sit at the feet of their elders and learn by the story of their lives what life must be to them. The experience of the generation just past is the master of our generation. Cæsar was Napoleon's chief; and the men who in our own time attain pre-eminence in any path of human skill or industry, will be the rulers of the destinies of men yet unborn: so powerful must ever be the influence of past greatness upon present events.

Since then we must be copyists, since we are made what we are by the realization of some ideal, it cannot be of trivial import that our ideal be one really worthy of imitation: that its realization in our life be a harmonious and beautiful work, a masterpiece in its way, a fulfilment of honest hopes, a consummation of earnest endeavour. It is not sufficient for us to desire greatness of soul, nobility

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of heart, loftiness of purpose and character. We must have these virtues presented to our soul in a manner concrete and individualized. This God has done for us. He has set before us a model perfect in the perfection of the Divinity itself ; no merely human hero gifted with one virtue in an excellent degree and the prey of a hundred defects : no great man who in public dazzles the popular sight with his magnanimity and disgusts the spectators of his private career by his pettiness ; no demigod, but God Himself, the essence of all that comes under the name of greatness and nobility. The lesson of our life here, then, is the imitation of Christ ; our work is to reproduce, as far as our feeble strength will permit, the image of His goodness, His unselfishness, His nobility, in the soul given us to perfect into that fullness of growth which makes it capable of seeing God. From Bethlehem to Golgotha the thrilling scenes of Jesus' life are set forth, perfect models for our imitation, but upon the Cross, every virtue of His life, every form of benevolent action, every type of divinely human mercy and compassion is concentrated. As His Death upon the Cross was His object in coming into the world, so it represents in all its fullness the perfect model of true humanity. His Death was the summing up of His life. Standing during these last days of Lent under the very shadow of the Cross we look up to the Crucified God and ask Him in this Death to teach us how to live. There upon that uplifted bed of torture, the Cross, hangs in more than human agony our Ideal, our Model. Gazing upon this

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dying God, let us think of what life ought to be, let us reflect on what *our* life ought to be.

We come at last to the closing scenes in the mediatorial battle: Raising His Head, Christ with outstretched Body, extending His hands as a Priest offering Sacrifice, utters the final sacrificial words, "It is finished." The rabble of mocking tormentors have one by one stolen silently down the hillside, across the valley, up through the ravine into Jerusalem. There is now no sound of weeping, nor of mockery, nor of blasphemy below. The horror of awful darkness is creeping apace over the whole scene; night, black night, at midday. Profound silence reigns there on the barren hill. The scene of the awful tragedy is hushed to a stillness like that of death. The seconds seem hours. Their passing is marked only by the subdued sobbing of those faithful ones below the Cross. Darkness and silence. It seems as if all must now be over; it seems as if Christ's agony must have ended. But hark! from out the darkness thick as midnight that hides the last struggle of God with evil, through the tomb-like silence there comes a voice: not a shriek of pain, not a moan of anguish, not a cry of complaint, but a voice that says in tones of triumphant victory over anguish and pain, "It is finished."

What mean these mysterious words? What is finished? What at that hour attained its completion, arrived at its perfection, stood forth entire, without defect, finished? Answer, O Son of God! Tell us before death robs us of Thy human presence, and the separation of soul from body throws up

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that impenetrable rampart that will sever us from Thee until death comes to us to open again the blessed sight eye to eye with God in the flesh ; while yet Thy divine body quivers with the thrill of human life, answer so that we may understand this mystery hidden under the words, " It is finished."

The pale, bloodless lips move not, nor return an answer to our question. But the Holy Spirit of God breathes over the listening world this answer : Sacrifice is finished ! Example is finished ! Redemption is finished !

Sacrifice is finished. The Son of God from His throne the Cross, the Altar of the perfect Sacrifice, the seat of the Victor Monarch, looks back through the boundless ages of eternity back into the eternity before time ; he gazes with the infinite vision of the Divinity back into that shoreless ocean of existence that was His before this atom of creation, the universe, came forth, and sees there in the mind of His Father this great design, this transcendent plan of the perfect sacrifice, the perfect example, the perfect redemption. He sees this purpose in the eternal decrees of God, that He, the Son of God, should become man. He sees the beginning of time, the origin of this creation which was the making of Man to the likeness of that image which He was to assume. All this He sees, looking back over the ages unchronicled by man. Sin there He beholds, entering into the good that God has made, and bringing with it the need of deliverance and restoration. Then came the moment when lifting up His voice in the courts of Heaven He cried out

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to mankind languishing in the despair of sin, to nations yearning and groaning in the pit of moral corruption, to sinners gazing with blind eyes, blind with tears and longing for the desire of the whole world, "Behold, I come,"

Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth, Jerusalem were sanctified by that advent. The air above them, their hills, their lakes were consecrated by the contact of His sacred Flesh. Now in all the vigour of perfect manhood with His Hands outstretched over the whole world like a High Priest of the perfect oblation He utters those sacrificial words, "It is finished"—the work given me to perform is completed. Not one of the many trials placed in my path have I shrunk from—the poverty, the obscurity, the persecutions of infancy and childhood; the weakness, the exposure, the want, that marked my youth; the stubbornness, the selfishness, the cowardice, the treachery of men; the shame, the torture, the Agony, the Passion of this last moment! Behold, O Father, look down, O God Eternal, and be witness, O Universe, all this is now complete, all perfected, all accomplished. It is finished! Hear now, O God, ye angels, man, aye and ye powers of darkness, hear the triumphant proclamation, published from this gifted throne: "It is finished!"

Our ideal and our model in life is Jesus, in the hours of His Passion, as well as in His life. How then are these words to be understood in reference to our lives? What import have they for our career? What bearing have they upon our destiny? There is an appointed course for every man to run.

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We came into this world as separate individuals. Each has a separate existence ; each a separate way ; each an individual duty ; each a particular and personal responsibility.

For us who profess to follow even from afar in the footprints of Christ there is no shifting of responsibility. It is all our own. We may give and take assistance ; we may lighten or increase the burden of human joy or sorrow ; but each act that is performed, each deed accomplished, leaves our hands stamped with the seal of our ownership, a seal indelible, ineffaceable, that will remain forever upon the deed. Men's paths interlace, as the unseen paths of countless ships at sea, or the myriad courses of birds in their flight ; but though they intertwine and interweave, and intermingle, they can never lose their identity ; never become the same, never be assimilated ; but each one must stand forth unique, particular, distinct. Each man has a purpose in the world, and though he himself be often unconscious of it, God never is. Each man can say as Christ did, " To this end was I born." Some lives tend to the accomplishment of some event that changes the face of nations, some deed that causes the world to pause and hold its breath for very awe and admiration, some act that stands out in bold capitals in the book that men call history. Some lives are enacted upon the lofty stage, with all the splendour of dramatic surroundings upon which is riveted the gaze of all humanity. Other destinies are wrought out according to God's design, hidden, unseen, unknown, like the limpid

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waters of some pool far beyond the path of man, some little mountain brooklet fringed with mosses, into which the stars of heaven, God's eyes, alone look down. But whether our work be obscure before the world it matters little. It is our work, the one individual thing for which we shall be held responsible, the one life upon the success of which must stand or fall our hopes for a blessed immortality, the one life entrusted to our keeping that we may return it, at its close, to God as Christ did, with His words, "It is finished."

Now that we understand the lesson of this word spoken to us by our Redeemer amid all the agonies of His Crucifixion, what are we to do to execute the precept? How are we to perfect our life? Again look up to the Cross, for there must you learn not only the meaning of the word, but the means to accomplish the command it contains. Look up to the wounded form that hangs suspended there between earth and heaven, in the bleak, chill air of early spring, alone, deserted, heart-broken, for He will not allow Himself even the luxury of tears. Look up and ask Him what made all this necessary; what demanded this awful ending of that innocent life. What was it? Ah, no need to ask. Sin; sin only—*my* sin; the sins of my life, the guilt of my actions, the faults of my conduct. It was this alone that made such sacrifice a necessity. It was the blotting out of them that made His sacrifice complete; that made His life finished. It is sin then, alone, that stands between my life-work and God, that makes the awful rent in the

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robe of my existence, that renders it incomplete, unfinished. Those sins of which we and God alone are conscious ; those sins that when we would lull ourselves to repose cry out to us with hideous mocking tones : Behold me, I am yours ! You seek in vain to bury me, you strive in vain to conceal me ! I am a part of your life ; I am the stains upon your soul. Ignore me if you will, but disown me you never can. You are responsible for me. I will eat like the moth into the most precious fabric of your life. I will gnaw into the golden threads of your good deeds, until they rot and decay and the web of your life is rent and torn to shreds. Unfinished ! When the web of life shall be held up for inspection, there shall be neither completeness nor symmetry to the design, but the blurred, imperfect outline of an unfinished work.

God will accept at the last day no half-made gift. They alone can look for the smile of approval and the word of approbation and the crown of merit who bring with them to the judgment seat of God a perfect oblation, a whole sacrifice, a complete offering. Who shall dare upon that dread day to come before Him to present to His Eternal Majesty a life that is a failure ? How will he stand before the face of God's wrath, Who opens the book of his life passed upon earth only to read there the records of iniquity and crime, of a life of wasted powers, of blasted hopes ? The drunkard who throws away God's noblest gift to man, the irreligious man who refuses to bend the knee before God's altar, or perform those sacred duties which God

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and His Church impose upon him, the blasphemer who trifles with the sacred name at whose mention hell trembles, the faithless husband, the unjust master, the dishonest merchant, when death comes and they stand at the threshold of eternity and look back upon all that they might have done, and all that they should have done, but the little, the very little, that in reality they have accomplished, how can they turn to God and say as Christ said, "It is finished"? How can they peacefully and triumphantly close the book from which will be drawn the verdict of eternity, if only sin and faithlessness and neglect stand forth in glowing letters?

Not all the evils that flesh is heir to, not all the suffering that humanity can bear, not all the grief that can fill the heart of man, not all the disappointments of which human life is full, can ever compare with the unutterable agony of him who at the end of his earthly career is driven to the cruel admission that his life has been a failure; that the time has arrived when the work must drop from his hand incomplete, unfinished. His life is not a failure perhaps before the world, not unfinished as men's judgment goes, but only in God's sight, because he has refused to co-operate in God's design; because during that life he recognized not God's purpose in his creation; because during that life he had time to attend to every other work but the one work necessary for him—the salvation of his own immortal soul. For every silly pleasure, for every childish toy, for every foolish vanity there was time and leisure, but for God's glory, for prayer, for duty,

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for eternity, there was naught but cold indifference. Now he lies helpless, feeble. He has exhausted his strength in the pursuit of the bubble, and as it bursts he beholds the grave opening before him. He recoils at this sudden transformation, and as the soil at his feet yields and he sinks into the yawning tomb, he cries with the wildness of despair, "O God, for one hour more!" The voice dies away into silence. Life is past.

Life is yet ours. Strength is still with us. Let us look up to the cross where Jesus died for us, and ask Him by the cruel pains He suffered to teach us so to order our daily actions that when we stand at the gate of Death we may look back upon a life devoted to God's service, not spotless, perhaps, not without some stains of human frailty, but of exertions supplemented by God's help, woven with one complete design, modelled after Christ Himself, a life complete—a life finished!

THE WONDERS OF GOD
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II

THE WONDERS OF GOD¹

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" And they sung a new canticle, saying : Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book and to open the seals thereof ; because Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in Thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."—Apoc. v, 10.

THE eyes of Christendom have been fixed these solemn days with deepest reverence upon the city of Chicago ; not so much Chicago, a wonder city, superb in material greatness, with its golden pinnacles of marvellous achievement proclaiming the triumph of American enterprise and genius ; rather Chicago kindly, princely in hospitality, deeply appreciative of religious ideals and spiritual values, pausing reverently to lift up its portals of splendour in order to welcome thousands and thousands of Christian disciples who as a " cloud of witnesses " have foregathered from far and near to acclaim before the entire world the truth and the glory of the Eucharistic sacrifice and the Eucharistic breaking of the Bread of Life.

CHICAGO A CITY BLESSED

To-day Chicago is spoken of as a city blessed and hallowed of God by millions within our American

¹ Preached at closing of the Eucharistic Congress, Mundelein, Illinois.

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borders and even by millions more beyond our frontiers. Verily, to them, as to us here present, Chicago these days has been a city of God, a temple of the Most High, a sanctuary of Christ, our Eucharistic King and Lord.

The heart of the Universal Church goes out in everlasting gratitude to the Archdiocese of Chicago, to its beloved and eminent Cardinal Archbishop, whose large vision and fearless leadership have fired, with holy enthusiasm and consecrated purpose, the clergy, the religious and the faithful of this great and noble Church of Chicago, to do mighty and wonderful things for God—*magnalia et mirabilia Dei*. Let it be carved into the imperishable record of these memorable days that the Church in America, recognizing the epoch-making character of this Eucharistic Congress, will not permit it to pass into history merely as an act of stupendous accomplishment, but will cherish and keep alive unto generations unborn the story of these days of faith triumphant and of glory transcendent.

To the Church of Chicago ever be the honour and glory of having prepared for our Eucharistic King a "*cænaculum grande stratum*"—an upper room, where Christ and His disciples have assembled to "eat the Pasch"—in surroundings of surpassing natural beauty and magnificence and under circumstances of spiritual jubilation and exaltation, if not unprecedented, at least hardly excelled outside the Eternal City itself, in the history of Eucharistic Congresses. Catholic Chicago may say with the psalmist: "Therefore will I give glory to thee, O Lord, among the nations."

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Demonstration after demonstration, one excelling the other in enthusiasm, fervour and splendour, on the part of prelates, priests and people, have marked the progress of the Congress in the cathedral city. The crowning hour of the Congress' triumphal culmination moves the closing scene of this monumental seminary foundation. Here, under the blue dome of heaven, above spire of cathedral and pinnacle of temple, we seek the heights and peaks of the everlasting hills that the world at large may behold this magnificent tribute and solemn acclamation to Christ—that the nations of the earth may hear our mighty "*credo*" and feel our flaming "*adoro*" in our public profession of faith and our supreme act of worship of our Eucharistic Lord and King.

PAGEANT NOT AN INNOVATION

Let it not be imagined that we to-day participate in an extraordinary innovation of Catholic faith or practice. We are but carrying on the historic panorama and supernatural pageantry of God's revelation and intercourse with man during the long sweep of the ages that rolled up to the foot of the cross, as well as of the centuries that have been unfolded since in our Christian era.

Vast though be this mighty concourse of the faithful assembled here to praise "the Lamb that was slain," the real vision reveals "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and in sight of the Lamb." These unite

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with us, or rather, we unite with them, in the unbroken continuity, the doctrinal integrity and the organic unity of the promise and the revelation of Christ, the Lamb of God, Priest and Victim, made manifest, in type and prophecy, during the Old Testament and, in reality and the fullness of truth, in the new dispensation.

Our solemn procession to-day continues and extends the long line of believers and adorers going back to the fathers of the human race. We behold patriarch, prophet, lawgiver, priest, judge, king and psalmist before altar, tabernacle and temple, all leading to the cross, the sublime objective and supreme fulfilment of the old law. We behold of the new law the virgin mother, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, virgins and the disciples of Christ the world over, emerging from the cenacle, believers in, witnesses to, and partakers of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The saints of the Old and the New Testament are our "*commensales, coheredes, et sodales*" co-congressists, and co-processionists, during this very Eucharistic Congress.

Catholic America has every reason to rejoice, in a special manner, during these days, because over our beloved land since its discovery four centuries ago by a Catholic navigator has hovered and spread the benediction of Our Blessed Saviour in the sacrifice and sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The early historic background of Christian America is emphatically eucharistic. It is a commonplace to mention that among the first public acts of Christian worship on our shores was the oblation of the

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Sacrifice of the Mass. It is also a commonplace to say that the pioneer missionaries, Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, who played so valuable and prominent a part in opening up the wilderness of this continent to civilization were, above all else, apostles, bearers and ministers of the Holy Eucharist. Like Elias of old, in his journey to Mount Horeb, who was nourished with bread ministered by an angel, these heroic priests of God found in the Blessed Sacrament "that sacrifice from which all martyrdom has drawn its source," the mighty spirit of their courage, of their endurance, of their boundless privations, and even for many of them the superhuman strength to suffer savage torture and the cruellest of deaths. History records that "the ministers of the Catholic faith had, before the middle of the sixteenth century, carried the cross and announced Christianity from the banks of the Chesapeake to the canyons of the Colorado."

DEDICATE LAKE TO EUCHARIST

A century later, Blessed Isaac Jogues, who was to dedicate the present Lake George, New York, to the Holy Eucharist by calling it "Lake of the Blessed Sacrament," penetrated the wilderness, here in the north, to the very outlet of Lake Superior, some years before, as Bancroft says, "The New England John Elliott had addressed the tribes of Indians that dwelt within six miles of Boston harbour." Prèe Marquette, following shortly after, reached, as you all know, Chicago, saying, "I shall gladly lay down my life for the salvation of souls—

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I am ambassador from God to enlighten new countries with the gospel."

Bancroft unmistakably points out that the dominant purpose of the early missionary was spiritual, "neither commercialism nor royal ambition; the motive was religion." This same historian, non-Catholic though he was, pays touching tribute to the Holy Eucharist. After describing the chanting of vespers and matins with the consecration of the sacred bread by solemn Mass near the council fires of the Huron tribes, he writes: "Beautiful testimony of the equality of the human race, the sacred wafer, emblem of the divinity in man, all that the Church offered to the Princes and nobles of the European world, was shared with the humblest savage neophytes." This, of course, was in full consonance with the spirit of Christ in His Church, "which cherishes every member of the human race without regard to lineage or skin." The trails blessed by these heroic missionaries through forest, atop mountains, across river and over prairie have developed into triumphal highways along which Catholic faith has erected hundreds and hundreds of temples and tabernacles to our Eucharistic King. An eucharistic assembly, therefore, is neither alien nor new to American soil.

Wherefore, it is meet and just that the Church who is in Christ the fruitful mother of the nations—*Sancta Mater Ecclesia*—should invite her children "out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation" to "declare His virtues who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." In

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company with the "cloud of witnesses" whose white-robed ranks reach back into the dim mists of antiquity and surge aloft, thronging the courts of heaven, the Church to-day in the foremost files of time, shining with the faith of the ages, chants a "new canticle" of victory to the Eucharistic King of kings and Lord of lords on her altars.

As history bears indisputable witness, the Church has never failed, nor can she fail, to render the "good confession" unto Jesus Christ before the peoples of the earth. Whether she calls out from the arena, through the martyr's blood, or from the desert solitudes, through the hermit's self-denial, or from the crowded highways, through the simple holiness of her children, her testimony is unto Christ, Who dwells invisibly within her. Her faith, her life, her victory, are made glorious in the light of the cross, for she is the spouse of the Lamb, "redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ." The Sacrifice of Calvary was and, as reacted in an unbloody manner in the Sacrifice of the Mass, morning after morning, throughout the Universal Church, continues to be the supreme and central fact and expression of her religious worship.

CHURCH ANNOUNCES ITS FAITH

In this solemn hour when the Church glows with light and heat of faith and hope and charity, in a manner more public than is her wont, she is indeed professing her unchanging and unchangeable belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist ; she is also preaching, heralding "the mystery of Christ,"

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Christ as it were proclaiming through her the triumph of divine love by the cross. To eyes that are held, to ears that are stopped up and to hearts that are dull, the Lamb of God lies forever dead with the shame and the pain and the failure of the cross folding around Him. But to the Church who draws her life from His death, her power from His weakness, her glory from His shame, her victory from His defeat, Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God, true God and true man, really present under the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist. "*Incruce latebat Sola Deitatas, Latet Simul et Humanitas.*"

To the Lamb of God in her Tabernacle who was "standing as it were slain" yet "alive" the Church may be said to repeat the sublime prayer which the living creatures and the ancients offer to the Lamb in Heaven: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book and to open the seals thereof, because thou wast slain." It is the faith of the Church that in Christ crucified "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He alone is worthy to open the Sealed Book, because he was "obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross." No mortal eyes have scanned the secrets of that book, but if the burden of the Scriptures be read aright, the prayer of Christ at the Last Supper reveals to us "the mystery of Christ": "That they may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us."

Union in God in Christ and through Christ, union in Christ in His Church and through His Church,

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this is the adorable mystery which gleams with heavenly light through the Eucharistic Lamb of God. God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world and "in charity . . . hath predestined us to the adoption of children through Jesus Christ." The Son of God became man that we might have life and have it more abundantly, life in Him and by Him and with Him. Through Christ we receive the grace of adoption as children of God. Through Christ we are made "partakers of the divine nature." Through Christ we become as other Christs, by putting on Christ, not equal to but like unto Christ Himself. The Son of God in His infinite love "hath rejoiced as a giant to run the way"—the way which led from life to death that we might live united in God, the way which led from the cross to glory that we might "glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God." "*Fulget crucis mysterium.*"

As the mystery of Christ spreads out before our souls, the marvels of God's inscrutable dispensation of mercy, wisdom and love shine out brilliantly, confusing our senses while they illumine our faith. God chose us in Christ; Christ chooses us in His Church. It is according to the purpose of the Divine will that the souls of men be united in Christ through His Church, even as all men are united in the Father through the Son. The Church is "the fullness" of Christ; through her the Lamb of God applies and reaps the harvest of the infinite store of merits won on the cross. Her sacraments issue, as it were, from the riven side of the Lamb of God, pierced on the cross. Living waters are they, filling souls with the

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life of Christ. Bonds of union are they, engrafting souls on Christ. Sources of Divine energy are they, by which men do the works of Christ. The Church is the mother of the living, bringing forth in Christ adopted children unto God, because the Lamb of God reigns in her. “*Regnavit a ligno Deus.*”

DIVINE WILL EXPLAINED.

The Son of God willed not only to purchase divine life for us by His death ; He willed not only to unite us to Himself through His Church ; it is the will of His infinite love that we feed on His body and blood, thus to sustain life and union with Him. “*Ecce panis angelorum factus cibus viatorum.*” He Who is life itself deigns to become in the sacrament of His love the Bread of Life, the bond of union for the members of His Church that He may abide in them and they in Him. “Take ye and eat,” says Christ. “This is My body. Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood of the new testament.” “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him.” “*Tantum ergo sacramentum.*” God chose us in Christ unto the adoption of children and the food appointed for God’s children is the body and blood of God’s own Son.

By communion with Christ in the Eucharist we unite ourselves with divinity ; we drink of the shoreless ocean of His graces ; yea, we identify ourselves through love and faith with the crucified Christ immolated on our altars. With what piercing light does the Angelic Doctor discourse on this virtue of the Eucharistic bread : “The Eucharistic food

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instead of being transformed into the one who takes it, transforms him into itself." It follows that the proper effect of the sacrament is to transform us so much into Christ that we can truly say: "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."

The living Christ in the Eucharistic banquet abides not only in the individual soul. He also unites Himself to the men of His Church as the head to the body, welding the union by the bonds of faith and hope and charity. With just and holy reason does St. Augustine call the Eucharist "the sign of unity," because this sacrament is a symbol of the intimate union of this mystical body of which Christ is the head. He alone can call the simple shepherd from the hills, the humble ploughman from the fields, the unlettered fishermen from the nets, the honest toiler from the shop, the money changer from the bench, the beggar from the roadside, the leper from the lazaretto, the woman of shame from the haunts of vice, even the thief from the gibbet, to come and sit down with kings and princes, the learned and the great, around His Eucharistic table, to break and partake of the bread of angels, His own body and blood. No visionary of the most idealistic utopian philosophy for the betterment and elevation of humankind could dream of, imagine or conceive a state of perfection comparable to the power, the dignity, the happiness and the destiny with which the Holy Eucharist blesses our weak and lowly nature.

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UNITY OF THE EUCHARIST

Would that the world might understand that by partaking of the Eucharist, "we being many," as St. Paul says, "are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread." Would that our beloved America had the grace to interpret its glorious "*E Pluribus Unum*" in a spiritual sense in the light of the Holy Eucharist. The Eucharist is the sacrament of union, as the word "communion" indicates. The Fathers of the Church having this mind in them "which was also in Christ Jesus," dwell with insistence upon the symbolism of bread and wine. Are not the grains of wheat ground and kneaded together that they may be united, forming one substance? Are not the grapes gathered and pressed together so that one beverage may flow from them? The worthy members of the Church eating of the body and drinking of the blood of the Lord "become one bread," for they abide in Christ and Christ in them. Down the ages the Church has been known to the nations by "the breaking of bread," manifesting to angels and to men the divine life which fills her, the divine union which preserves her. It is in Christ and through Christ that the Church has maintained against the stress and storms of the centuries unchanging unity of faith, unbroken unity of government and unshaken unity of mission.

The Church of God is one, even as there is only "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." Whether she be conceived as the mystical body of Christ or as the spouse of Christ

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or as the Kingdom of God or as the Temple of God, the Church of Christ is built upon the Rock of Peter ; " thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church . . . and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." "*Ubi est Petrus, ibi Ecclesia.*" It is Christ Himself through the living voice of Peter and his successors, Who feeds the lambs and the sheep, teaching them, commanding them, binding and loosing. "*Ubi est Ecclesia, ibi Christus.*"

When faith and history present to us the vision sublime of the Church, like an angel of light, ministering through the ages of light, ministering through the ages to all peoples and in every clime, we behold Christ Himself, the invisible head of the Church, reigning in the Chair of Peter, the visible head, present with him " all days even to the consummation of the world," and operating through Him with " all power . . . in heaven and in earth " into the formation of " one body." The See of Peter is the visible centre of unity even as the Eucharist is the visible sign of unity in the Church. The Church of Peter is and always has been recognized as " one bread . . . all that partake of one bread " look down the years, cycle after cycle, from this present hour even to the beginning, and gaze upon the glorious spectacle which the Church has woven on the roaring loom of time. Behold Peter, yea, it is Christ through Peter, dispensing the bread of life, the body and blood of the Lord, to the children of the Church " from out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation." "*Ubi est Petrus/ibi, Corpus Domini.*"

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A TRADITION OF THE POPES

From the faith of Peter confessing the Eucharist, from the power of Peter guarding the Eucharist, from the love of Peter dispensing the Eucharist, was born the living tradition which the Sovereign Pontiffs have cherished and nourished with jealous care during the unbroken line of their reign. When Rome of the Cæsars raged with demon hate against the infant Church, Rome of Peter fled into the catacombs, bearing the Eucharistic Lamb of God, there in the dark heart of the earth to adore Him, to receive Him, to offer Him up and to guard Him from unholy eyes and unholy hands. In later centuries, before the advancing tide of barbarian hosts, stand the towering figures of Peter's successors, a Leo and a Gregory, meeting and stemming the onrush, while around them rise up walled monasteries and cloistered temples to shield and shelter the hidden Christ in the Eucharist.

In the ages of faith, when the effulgent rays of Catholic belief shone from the Chair of Peter, lighting up dark lands and subduing souls to Christ, magnificent fanes, creations of Catholic faith, tabernacle of the Eucharistic King of kings and Lord of lords, mirrored the glory of His majesty. In these latter days, when charity has grown cold, the Holy See, solicitous that the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ be recognized and spread abroad over the earth, has encouraged such public demonstration of Catholic faith as Eucharistic Congresses.

To-day the apostolic and historic tradition of

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the Papacy shines in all its ancient glory in the person of Pius XI, our gloriously reigning Pontiff. An all-pervading and all-comforting consciousness of the presence of the Peter among us surges and pulses throughout the Congress. Bowing in fervent adoration before the majesty of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, we are conscious that the Vicar of Christ, far off in the Eternal City, is rapt in holy contemplation of the events of these wonderful days. Heralding to the four corners of the earth the oneness of our solemn profession of our sublime faith in Christ, we are conscious that Pope Pius XI during his glorious pontificate has stirred the world again and again by reiterating Peter's unfailing confession of the ages: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

Furthermore, we are more than conscious of the presence of the Vicar of Christ in His illustrious legate, a John, revered and beloved of the Church in America, upon whose bosom will repose and in whose hands will be borne shortly our Eucharistic Lord and King. None more exalted, none more worthy, none more fitting than Peter, in his representative, to part the sacramental veils and bear out from the mystical silence of the tabernacle our hidden God—that He, the Christ of type and promise, the Christ of Bethlehem and Calvary, the Christ of Cenacle and Catacomb, the Christ of the ages of faith and of human history, the Christ of all nations and of our fathers, the Christ of our altars and our firesides, the Christ of our hearts and souls, the Christ of our life and death, the Christ of our

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undying loyalty and burning love—the Christ of all in Heaven and on earth, at the mention of whose sacred name every knee should bend and every tongue sing praise, may now move among us to save, to sanctify and to bless all mankind forevermore.

To the angelic hosts of the tabernacle who, day and night, keep vigil in adoration and love under the sanctuary lamp, we appeal to unite with us in our final triumphal canticle to Christ our Eucharistic Lord, Whose delight is to abide and walk among the civilization of men. We pray Mary, Queen Mother of the Saints, and the saints themselves, to lend voice and harmony to our mighty chorus of praise and jubilation. We invoke St. Thomas Aquinas, the Doctor of the Holy Eucharist, to attune our canticle to the doctrinal and devotional outbursts of his sublime wisdom and love for the Blessed Sacrament, revealed in his immortal liturgical psalmody of the "*Pange Lingua*" the "*lauda Sion Salvatorem*," the "*O Salutaris*" and the "*Adoro Te Devote*."

"Jesus, Whom for the present veiled we see," grant that our vision of this sublime and never-to-be-forgotten acclaim to Thee, our Eucharistic Lord and King, may find expression in the words of the beloved disciple: "We saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

*Tantum Ergo Sacramentum.
Laus et Jubilatio.*

THE BREAD OF LIFE
MOST REV. ARCHBISHOP GOODIER, S.J.

III

THE BREAD OF LIFE

MOST REV. ARCHBISHOP GOODIER, S.J.

"The bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."—John vi, 52.

IT was the day after the feeding of the multitude on the plain above the lake of Galilee. Those men, women and children had spent the night upon the green grass of the place ; they had risen in the morning and had looked for Him, for they had seen for themselves overnight that He had not left them. Up the hill they went, as more than once before they had done at Capharnaum, making sure that, as then, they would find Him in some nook absorbed in prayer. But He was nowhere to be found. They had come there the day before to prevent Him from leaving them ; in spite of all they had lost Him ; there was nothing for it but to make their way back home as best they might, to Capharnaum and its neighbourhood.

Accordingly they began their preparations. They looked at the spot where the wonderful event of yesterday had taken place ; they discussed it among themselves ; they discussed, too, their own conclusions, that He who had done this thing must be the prophet ; that therefore He must be the king that was to come into the world. They wondered why He had rejected this last title, He who had

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spoken so often to them of the kingdom He had come to found. They commented on His sudden disappearance from their midst ; they went back on the miracle He had worked ; as they pondered now with their enthusiasm cooled, a reaction began to set in. Perhaps after all they had been mistaken ; perhaps they had made too much of it ; was what He had done as great a deed as that which had been done by His predecessor, Moses ? Moses had fed the people in the desert with bread brought down from heaven ; Jesus had fed them by multiplying common barley loaves. Certainly, when next they met, there would be questions to ask Him, there would be explanations to be given.

It would have been past midday before boats from Tiberias landed their passengers at the Capharnaum quay. To their surprise they found Him with His Twelve already in the town. The quay was just below the market square ; alongside of the square, to the north, was built their synagogue, the pride of all Galilee ; on that spot they met. Naturally one thought was uppermost in the people's minds ; for the moment the rest was forgotten. For here was yet another wonder. They had seen Him go up into the mountain the night before ; here He was to-day in Capharnaum before them ; how had this been done ? They came about Him ; characteristically once more they dropped into their old familiarity ; yesterday He was the prophet, fit to be their king ; to-day He is " only Jesus," to be questioned and addressed even as any other labourer.

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“ And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him : Rabbi, when camest thou hither ? ” (John vi, 25).

But Jesus was not to be drawn away from the task He had set before Him for that day. How He had come was no concern of the merely curious multitude ; what did concern them was the great thing He had done for them the day before, and that they should rightly understand it. Already He had prepared them, and had given them sufficient warning. On the very spot where they had just landed, a month or two ago, He had begun to warn them by preaching to them in parables ; He had told them that seeing they did not see, and hearing they did not hear and would not understand. He would make one last effort ; He would try to shame them into a grander act of faith ; yesterday He had prepared them for it, now He would begin anew by provoking them into belief. He loved them, but He would affect to blame them ; He had so much more than mere barley bread to give them, but He must induce them to ask Him for it. Sternly, therefore, as if rebuking them, He set their question aside. “ Jesus answered them and said : Amen, amen, I say to you, you seek me, not because you have seen miracles, but because you did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you. For him hath God the Father sealed ” (John vi, 26, 27).

This was a sudden check. Again it was clear

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that He spoke "as one having authority"; instead of being gratified by their enthusiasm of yesterday, He seemed utterly to ignore it. He had fed them and they had been grateful in their way; He now spoke of another food, of another life. But of that they made little account. After all, these Galileans were what nowadays men call practical. They believed in a religion which had bread in it; a religion which cured diseases, and led to empires and thrones; a religion that worked; dogma had for them no attraction, especially dogma which made this Jesus of Nazareth anything more than themselves. "Son of Man," yes, let Him give Himself that title. "Him hath God the Father sealed." What could that mean? Let Him instead come down to things of life, and, if He liked, teach them something about work.

"They said therefore unto him: What shall we do that we may work the works of GOD?" (John vi, 28).

At once He gave them their answer.

"Jesus answered them and said to them: This is the work of GOD, that you believe in him whom he hath sent" (John vi, 29).

They were momentous words; they were the words which have for ever made the cleavage between two camps. Works, yes, as much as men would; but the first and greatest of all works was faith in Himself; indeed without that work all others mattered little. More and more in the long years after, when the old apostle John reflected on his Master, he saw, as he had seen less clearly at the

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time, how He had insisted on this fundamental faith as the beginning of all else. Men wished to see things done ; men would always wish to see things done ; in that craving they would fail to see the deeper thing, which was life itself ; and as he looked and pondered, and at times grew weary with the shortsightedness of men, instinctively he emphasised the more the warning of the Master.

“ This is the work of GOD, that you believe in him whom he hath sent ” (John vi, 29).

“ This is eternal life, that they may know thee, the only true GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent ” (John xvii, 3).

“ These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of GOD, and that believing, you may have life in his name ” (John xx, 31).

“ This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he hath given commandment unto us ” (1 John iii, 23).

In this last sentence the old man John gives the answer that lay within the words of Jesus. For the life of all good works is love, and only love ; and the love that is most living flows through the veins of man from the heart of Jesus Christ, who is its source.

The men of Capharnaum listened. They were in a dilemma. They would be sorry to part with Jesus. He was their benefactor ; He was their friend ; many good works He had done among them. They put Him above all others in their esteem ; only yesterday they had owned Him as “ the prophet,”

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and had been willing to proclaim Him king. But He wanted something more. He spoke of giving food for life everlasting ; He said GOD the Father had sealed Him ; He said GOD had sent Him ; He said they were to believe in Him on this account. This was much to ask ; why was He not content with the homage they were willing to pay Him ? But if He did insist on more, where was the evidence ? The miracles ? But other prophets had worked miracles ; they had even raised the dead to life and yet had made no such claim. The feeding of yesterday ? Yes, at the moment it had carried them away ; but now, on sober reflection, it was not so great a miracle as that of Moses in the desert. If they would be safe they must be cautious ; they must not believe more than the evidence warranted ; they did not wish to offend Him who was their friend, much less to lose so great a benefactor, still they must be led by their saving common sense, their human reason, their plain knowledge of plain facts. They would therefore not contradict Him ; they would only hesitate ; they would ask for further proof ; they would suggest their difficulty ; they would let Him see that though they held back they were at least men of goodwill and open-minded.

“ They said therefore to him : What sign, therefore, dost thou show, that we may see, and may believe thee ? What dost thou work ? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written : He gave them bread from heaven to eat ” (John vi, 30, 31).

However disguised it was an open challenge ; and

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this time the challenge came, not from His enemies, the scribes and Pharisees, but from those who professed to be His friends. He had done for them a wonder in bread, but He had not brought down bread from heaven ; if He claimed to be greater than Moses, let Him give a sign greater than that which Moses gave.

And Jesus accepted the challenge. He had prepared for it ; the miracle He had worked the day before had provoked it. But only by degrees would He give them their answer ; in three ways would He show them how the type had been fulfilled, and the last would be the greatest of all ; to that He must lead them. He would begin with that which was easy, and which they would accept without demur.

“ Then Jesus said to them : Amen, amen, I say to you, Moses gave you not bread from heaven ; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of GOD is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world ” (John vi, 32, 33).

Thus far there was nothing strange. Evidently He spoke of the truth of GOD, and they would show Him that they welcomed it.

“ They said therefore unto him : Lord, give us always this bread ” (John vi, 34).

But now He must take them further ; the moment for the great leap had come. True what He had to say was not wholly new ; in one way or another He had said it before. But every time they had passed it by ; they had ignored it as beyond their under-

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standing; the miracles had preoccupied their attention, they had looked on the rest as some figure of speech which it suited Him to use, and which they needed not to fathom. But this time all was different. He meant to be taken literally or not at all; deliberately He applied to Himself the words they had already accepted. Life was nourished by bread; the bread came directly from God the Father; He was that bread, He had come from the Father, merely to accept Him was life everlasting. This was His whole message; this they had hitherto failed to grasp; there was warning in His words as He spoke, but still more there was the most plaintive appeal.

“And Jesus said to them: I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst . . . And this is the will of my Father that sent me; that everyone who seeth the Son, and believeth in him, may have life everlasting. And I will raise him up in the last day” (John vi, 35, 40).

This time at least the words were no mere figure of speech; the statement was unmistakable and could not be avoided. He claimed to be the Bread of Life; He claimed to have come down from heaven; He claimed that belief in Him gave life everlasting. But how could this be? Even with the best will in the world, how could this be accepted? Was He not Jesus of Nazareth? And were not His father and mother quite ordinary people, known to everybody? Thus at last the argument from Nazareth had trickled through to Capharnaum;

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the familiarity of Nazareth which had led to contempt was being re-enacted here ; for the third time His antecedents were cast up against Him, His lowliness was made an unanswerable proof against His greatness. So it has been through all time.

“ The Jews therefore murmured at him, because he said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. And they said : Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know ? How then saith he, I came down from heaven ? ” (John vi, 41, 42).

Jesus heard their murmuring, but He made no effort to correct it. Deliberately from the first He had taken up this place in human life ; He had exposed Himself to the charge of His lowly origin. He had hidden Himself beneath this human flesh ; He had intended that the work of man should be to discover Him beneath it ; if they would seek they would find, if they would not He would remain to them but Jesus of Nazareth and no more. He would give them the means to find Him, in His deeds, in His words, most of all in Himself. To them who sought, light would be given, and more light, and yet more, until at last they saw what to human understanding was invisible. Meanwhile He would wait, and endure, and, if He could, even in their culpable ignorance find for them excuse.

These men murmured because they did not see ; while they persisted in taking human standards they would never see ; still, though the fault were their own, yet seventy times seven times would He

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condone, waiting till the light were given them.

“ Jesus therefore answered and said to them : Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him ; and I will raise him up in the last day. . . . Everyone that hath heard of the Father and hath learned cometh to me. . . . Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life ” (John vi, 43-47).

It was the last warning before the great teaching was given. He knew that teaching would, by the majority that then heard it, be rejected ; therefore would He prepare Himself for the disappointment by what defence of them He could make. He would not look at the present rejection ; He would look forward to the day when His doctrine would be grasped, and would be made a thing of life, and all the world would rejoice, and find its real peace, in the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament. Never before had He been so lavish of His favours as He had been in these last four-and-twenty hours. In return He had had His lowly origin and upbringing cast in His teeth ; humble of heart He had accepted it, meekly He had said nothing. Instead He had merely asked them not to murmur, He had invited them yet more warmly to come ; if they would come, and would accept what He was about to give them, they would receive—oh ! what would they not receive ! He can only sum it up in the words : “ Everlasting life.”

But they would fail ; He knew they would fail ; still He would wait no longer. Let them reject it

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or not, the truth should be given to them. They had been prepared, both in the long preceding months and during all that day. They had said they would believe, they had asked for the bread that He had to give them ; carefully He had led them on, from the barley loaves to the bread unto life everlasting, to faith in Him the messenger of the Father, to faith in Him the bread that came from heaven. He had only one thing more to do ; in plain terms He would say it, so plain, that by no possibility could He be mistaken. Carefully He chose His words ; step by step He picked up what He had already said ; as was His wont He recapitulated, and in the recapitulation added something more—the bread of life, the manna of Moses, the bread this time truly from heaven, the living bread, Himself, Himself in His very body, in His living body, His life thus passing into everyone who would eat Him.

“ I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever. And the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world ” (John vi, 48-52).

To all who heard those words they came as a dreadful shock. They were not understood ; it was not intended that they should be understood ; in their full significance they are not understood to-day and never will be. In themselves, taken as they

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were uttered, they contained what seemed impossible ; but precisely in that came the test of faith. Impossible or not, He had said it ; if men believed in Him they would accept it, knowing that somehow it would be found to be true ; if they did not, it would remain impossible and they would part. But to say that the words meant nothing, that they meant no more than any man could understand and approve at first sight, is to reduce to bathos the most important controversy of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

There were many in the synagogue of Capharnaum that day who were loth to part with Jesus. They would gladly keep Him if they could ; not only had He done much for them, but even as a man of GOD He was worthy to be heard ; if they could find a meaning for His words that would satisfy them all might yet be well. They turned to one another ; they asked each other questions, they made suggestions. But none would hold ; the words must be taken as they were uttered or not at all.

“ The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying : How can this man give us His flesh to eat ? ” (John vi, 53).

It is to be noticed that these men of Capharnaum added to that which Jesus is reported to have said. He had said : “ The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world ” (John vi, 52).

Had they stopped there, some other interpretation might have been found ; some mystical meaning, or at least it might have been said that the “ flesh for the life of the world ” was ultimately

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given on Calvary. But the mind of those who heard Him saw no such interpretation. To them His flesh was to be bread indeed, and as such was to be eaten; so they understood Him; if they were wrong, it was for Him to correct them. He did no such thing; since they had so understood Him, He would not draw back. Yes, His flesh, as they had said, was to be food; His living flesh was to be living food; let them eat His living flesh and they would eat His very life; in this eating of the real substance of Himself they would fulfil the prophecy contained in the manna of Moses in the desert. He confirmed their interpretation; He put it beyond the shadow of a doubt. Men might take it or might reject it; but in taking it or rejecting it they took or rejected Him, for only on their faith in Him could they hope to believe in such a mystery.

This was the tenor of His answer. More firmly now than ever He spoke to them; before He had used the argument of appeal; He now used that of authority.

“Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed: he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. . . . This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead, he that eateth this bread shall live for ever” (John vi, 54-59).

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It was not only the unlettered multitudes that were mystified by what they had heard. There were others who, till now, had been proud to call themselves His friends, His followers, His disciples ; some who had heard from John the Baptist long ago that this was indeed " the Lamb of GOD," and on the strength of that declaration had gone after Him ; some who had witnessed at Cana the turning of water into wine, and had believed the more ; some who could recall what He had said to the woman in Samaria, concerning the living water He would one day give ; some who remembered how at the door of this very synagogue a demoniac had called Him " the Holy one of GOD " ; some who were present when, in this very town, He had proved His power to forgive a man his sins ; some who had seen Him at Naim across the valley, raise a boy to life, showing His command of life and death ; some who knew how He had ruled the winds and the sea and they had obeyed Him ; many who had seen the daughter of Jairus, after she too had been raised to life ; many who had witnessed the wonders of this last day, the feeding of the thousands, the morning of lavish miracles ; they had seen and had known all these things, and had thought they had learnt Him ; yet now their faith and understanding had a check. To believe in Him, yes ; to accept what He said, provided it agreed with their common sense, yes ; but to be told that He gave them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink ! " Many of his disciples hearing it said : This is a hard saying, and who shall hear it ? " (John vi, 61.)

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They thought a little longer ; they listened to the voice which said : “ You shall not die the death ” (Genesis iii, 4).

“ After this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him ” (John vi, 67).

It was a definite parting of the ways ; one may say it was the beginning of heresy. Jesus stood in the synagogue with His twelve around Him, and watched the crowd dwindle down before His eyes. He made no effort to stop them ; He did not correct the interpretation they had put upon His claim ; to the end He loved them and longed for them, yet He let them go. Do we need further confirmation of the meaning of His words ?

Truly that day the heart of Jesus Christ was wounded ; it was a strange return for the gift He had offered to all the world. He looked about Him for relief ; there were still the Twelve standing around Him ; He would put them to the test. In the whole story of Jesus, is there anywhere a more intensely human touch than that which we find here, when His appealing eyes turned to them and He said :

“ Will you also go away ? ” (John vi, 68).

Such an appeal was too much for Simon. What Jesus had said he did not in the least understand ; but that did not trouble him. Who was he that he should understand all that his Master said or did ? That He had said it was enough ; he loved Him, and love can see where reason is short-sighted. Already he had heard much he had not understood and afterwards it had been made clear ; of these words,

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too, in the proper time and place, the explanation would come. Meanwhile the Master must be comforted. He must be shown that He had companions, who cared, who believed, who trusted, who were faithful, who were willing to accept everything He said because He said it. In his spontaneous outpouring Simon scarcely knew the generosity of his words when he cried: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed, and have known, that thou art the Christ, the Son of God" (John vi, 69, 70).

It was a wonderful confession; in words at least there was little more to add. For all time Simon had framed the grand act of faith in the bread from heaven which has built up the world ever since into a new life and shall build it up until time itself is merged in eternity.

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IV

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“ Paupercula, tempestate convulsa, absque ulla consolatione, ecce ego sternam per ordinem lapides tuos, et fundabo te in sapphiris.”

“ O poor little one, tossed by the tempest, bereft of all comfort, behold I will set thy stones in order, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires.”—Isaiah liv, II.

THIS day's work puts the roof and crown upon a hundred and twenty years' stubborn endeavour. In a double sense those have been years of gradual and steady expansion, of slow and patient upbuilding. Hand in hand with the marks of spiritual increase have marched the tokens of material betterment. We have in both fields “enlarged the place of our tent and stretched out the skins of our tabernacles”: we have “spared not”: we have “lengthened our cords, and strengthened our stakes.”¹ The dreary days when our forefathers gathered for prayers in some bare attic, or repaired ere break of day to the hall of some still well-to-do Catholic family, or sought shelter for their devotions here in this city under the wing of some embassy, were rolled away more than a century ago: and in the meantime, despite the poverty of most of us, notwithstanding

Preached on the day of the Consecration of Westminster Cathedral, June 28, 1910.

¹ Is. liv, 2.

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the many channels into which our alms have had to flow, we have, aided by those who fled to us from the shores of Erin, or who joined us from other folds, covered the land with some hundreds of shrines, which, if by no means as numerous, or as stately and glorious as those wherein our worship was of old observed, are at this day dearer in our eyes than all those, for the same reason that the second temple was deemed holier and more beauteous than the first. And to-day at last we have taken formal possession, or rather Christ in His twofold character of King and Priest, has taken formal possession of what neither He nor we have hitherto had, a Metropolitan Church. That time-honoured and poetic rite, according to which all the mediaeval Cathedrals of England were hallowed, has been employed around and upon this majestic, still sombre pile. The lustral water has thrice been sprinkled on the circuit of its walls ; the sacred chrism has anointed them ; the relics of the Martyrs have been borne into it to the strains of psalm and holy chant ; its altars have been laved and aneled, and sweet incense has been burned thereon ; and the Great Sacrifice has been offered to God within it, not as in a house lent to His use, but as in one made over by deed of gift to Him, and by Him duly accepted. Great, then, and heart-felt is our joy. And to what shall we, in our measure, compare it save to the exultation which filled the breasts of the Christians of Rome, when, after three centuries of gloom, and blood, and the stealthy practice of interdicted rites, they beheld their Pontiff, Silvester, come from his

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hiding-place on Soracte, dedicating his own Cathedral Church of Lateran to the Saviour? To what shall we, in our measure, compare it, save to the rapture of the children of Israel, when their youthful king, flushed with the promise of his opening reign, solemnly gave to God the house which his father had vowed to build; when the glory of the Lord filled its courts, and the wandering and the warring of ages were forgotten? As we look back upon "the darksome time and the many days" at last ended, may I not be permitted to say to you, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see: for I say unto you that many kings and prophets have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them?"¹ How our Martyrs would have exulted to behold this day, and the bones that had been humbled would have rejoiced! How would the sight of this day, had it been granted them to foresee it, have gladdened the hearts of those rulers of a scanty and scattered flock, Bishops Giffard, and Challoner, and Talbot, and Douglass, names that will ever be graven on our hearts, and fall like sweet music upon our ears! We are fortunate, indeed, in having here enshrined in the very heart of this sacred fabric the remains of Westminster's two first Archbishops, noble champions of an enfranchised and growing people, ancestors of what will prove a long and illustrious line. They lie at last where they would ever have wished to lie—the one, Roman Cardinal and English-

¹ Luke x, 23, 24.

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man, beneath the floor of such a fane as haunted his rich fancy in dreams ; the other, Englishman and Roman Cardinal,

“ Here in streaming London’s central roar ;
Where the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.”

Both, we may hardly doubt, have been with us in spirit during the rejoicings of this day. To both, as we may believe, has it been given to feel, if not to behold, the fulfilment of their hopes. But there are two others who might have claimed to be here in body too, and who, had God so chosen to allow, might well have been spared to be here, the master-will that bade this church arise, and the master-mind that shaped it. Both had lovingly watched the steady growth of each uprising wall, the patient moulding of each arch, the firm setting of each well-chosen column, and both had yearned to see the advent of this day. But they were not to see it. “ In this is the saying true, that it is one man that soweth, and it is another that reapeth.”¹ Their absence to-day reminds us that all we, whilst we plan for God, and give to God, and build for God, are ourselves as stones in the hands of the everlasting Architect, who builds of us, His handiwork, a dwelling-place for Himself above, a tabernacle not made by hand of man ; that city, whose wall is of jasper stone, but the city itself of pure gold, like unto transparent glass ; wherein is no temple found, “ for

¹ John iv, 37.

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the Lord God Almighty is the temple thereof, and the Lamb.”¹ Within the walls of that fair city, each as we may hope, abides in the beams of that light that is shed neither by sun, nor by moon, nor by any star; and each from his appointed niche smiles down upon us that are gathered here to-day, “that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”²

True to that dramatic instinct which has so largely shaped her liturgy, the Church, in consecrating a temple to God, affects to treat it as a living and rational creature, capable of the effects of sanctification in the same way as is a human soul. It is by the waters of baptism and by the aneling of the holy chrism that, through the operation of God’s spirit, the soul of man is incorporated into Christ’s Mystic Body, and becomes a member of the household of faith, a fellow-citizen of the Saints. This incorporation is primarily wrought by the impress of an indelible seal, which is called the seal of the Cross of Christ, because it is by His blood that the Christian is rescued from destruction, even as the children of Israel were saved from death by the sprinkling of the blood of the lamb upon their doorposts, and were sped upon their way into the promised land. It is that seal, set as a symbol upon our forehead, but stamped upon the substance of our soul, that stays the Avenger’s arm upraised above us. “Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and mark Thou upon the fore-

¹ Rev. xxi, 22.

² John iv, 36.

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heads of the men that sigh and mourn for all the abominations that are committed in the midst thereof.”¹ In virtue of that seal Christ takes possession of the soul, consecrating it to His worship, and adorning it with His manifold gifts : and then, when by the hidden influence of His Divinity He has entered as King and Lord into His own house, “ which house,” in St. Paul’s words, “ we are,”² He who is also the Great High Priest, at one and the same time He who offers, and He to whom offering is made, and That also which is offered, enters into the lowly tenement of the body of man with the verity of His own Real Body too, and thus completes in fullest measure the union and incorporation of His creature with Himself.

By a series of parallel rites the new-raised temple is washed with hallowed water, it is anointed too with chrism, and athwart the length and breadth of its floor is traced the sign of the Cross of Christ, of Him who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Wisdom that “ reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly,”³ He to whom every tongue maketh confession, to whom the Father hath said, “ Ask of me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for thine inheritance, and the farthest bounds of the earth for thy possession.”⁴ The relics of the Saints are reverently borne in, that they who stand perpetually before the throne of God may keep watchful guard over the house now dedicated to

¹ Ezech. ix, 4.

² Heb. iii, 6.

³ Wisd. of Sol. viii, 1.

⁴ Psalm ii, 8.

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Him ; the altar, too, is washed and anointed ; and then, when all is ready, when psalm, and litany, and blessing are ended, when the might of the Great King has filled His temple, the King of might Himself enters in as High Priest too : not darting rays of fierce effulgence, as when he spake with Moses on the mount, " so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance " ¹ ; nor as when once " a cloud filled the house of the Lord, and the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord, " ² but in lowliness and in meekness, bearing the semblance of death about Him, at once our Victim and our Food, the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, the clean Oblation that is offered in every place from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, and that shall be offered until He, the Lamb of God, shall " come with the clouds, and every eye shall behold Him, even they who pierced Him. " ³

But since wood and stone and marble block, though hallowed and dedicated to God, cannot be initiated into Christ's kingdom, nor share in the effects of His priesthood, what else can be typified by this varied rite, what other truth is it meant to portray for us and to impress upon us, than this great truth, that all we, who are to join here in the celebration of one worship, have been, as a congregation and a people, consecrated to Christ our King

¹ 2 Cor. iii, 7.

² 3 Kings viii, 10, 11.

³ Rev. i, 7.

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and our High priest? Of what are we reminded but of this, that we belong to that supernatural society, that Mystic Body of Christ, over which He, its Head, wields a twofold power in His office of King and of Priest—that twofold power which, invisible though He be, He ever exercises through the visible pastorate of His Church, the power of jurisdiction and the power of order; that twofold power which, undivided in Him, and issuing from Him, has descended undivided to His Church, and is held by her in sacred conjunction? With the one power He builds up and fashions His temple; with the other He furnishes and adorns it. The one gives solidity and strength to His building, the other imparts to it life and grace and beauty. The one defends it against the ravages of time, the other endows it with the freshness of perennial youth. “Behold I will set thy stones in order, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires.”

The Catholic belief in the divine plan of the constitution of the Church, and Catholic belief in the existence and the efficacy of the Eucharistic Sacrifice have, here at least in this our country, gone hand in hand. They came in together, and they went out together. Our forefathers, however much they loved their island home, “this precious stone set in the silver sea,” were no mere islanders in the matter of religion, but owned themselves to be one out of many provinces of a vast spiritual empire. Over these far-stretching provinces ruled overseers, each of whom succeeded within a determined area, and in a limited degree, to the power of the Apostles,

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and formed the historic Episcopate : while over them ruled the *Episcopus episcoporum*, the occupant of that one See, which all ages had united in calling the See Apostolic, since to it alone had the fullness of Apostolic power descended ; and in it men saw the historic Apostolate. Thus the Church, constitutionally and territorially universal, gathering into its one fold men of every nation and clime, stood forth as a marvel of world-wide organisation, a pattern of perfect beauty, the presentment of multiplicity in unity. The Episcopate, like Michelangelo's ideal temple, alas ! never realized, thrust its four equal arms to North and South, to East and to West, and above those branching arms, like a dome, soared the Apostolate in reposeful grandeur, giving unity and completeness and harmony of scope and purpose to the whole. The guidance of the living Apostle was felt in every land, and kings and nobles and peoples owned his beneficent and humanizing sway. The indelible tokens of his active presence are written large across the memorials and institutions and usages of every European country. Our own history teems with the undeniable records of his rule. Each particular church might have its customs, as ours had, yet there was but one standard of faith, and one common law for the universal Church, and of these the Apostle who sat in Peter's Chair was the supreme exponent. Friction we know there was, and at times hot debate, since the Church has her human side as well as her divine ; debate waged on that dim borderland of right where Church and State overlap and intermingle. We can discern

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fault and error on the one side and on the other. Yet our fathers in those ages, in spite of fault and error, believed that Christ verily reigned in His Vicar. The Church was not to them an aggregate of uncombined parties, a mosaic without design or meaning, a jumble of colours. They did not then question the heavenly origin of the supreme spiritual power, nor did they as yet, by merging it in the secular jurisdiction, corrupt and change its divine essence and sink it to the level of a mere prerogative of earth. "Behold I will set thy stones in order."

And as the kingly power of Christ, ever moulding, shaping and ruling His Church, was acknowledged and revered in the historic Episcopate and the historic Apostolate, so His priestly power, shared by Him with the ministers of His Church, was acknowledged and loved in that grand central act of worship instituted by Him, wherein He is unbloodily immolated, and in each succeeding age applies the merits of His passion to the race so dearly redeemed by Him, before whose eyes His death is daily set forth, and shall be until He, the Lord, come again. Around this sublime sacrificial act the whole glorious liturgy of the Church revolved. It drew her children, as with a common bond, around her altars in every land. It displayed to them the most splendid and moving of pageants, in which heaven itself bore the leading part. It not only kindled piety, but quickened invention, and stimulated art. To do it honour they poured out their riches with a lavish hand. Whatever of rare and precious the wide earth held was gathered in to grace it. To it we owe those fair

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visions of the mind, which, wrought in stone or marble, displaying every variety of style, frowning in austere grandeur, or rioting in a wealth of graceful adornment, stand to this day as witnesses of the faith of former ages, still challenging imitation and still baffling it. The duomos of Siena and Milan, the Cathedrals of Toledo and Strasburg, of Bourges and Rheims and Amiens, and countless other noble shrines, all tell the same tale as the dearer and scarcely inferior creations of this our own beloved land. They were made for the Mass. Their ancient rites and records, their ornaments, their structure, all join in proclaiming it. Men felt in those days that, in building their churches, they were building a home for their God made Man, who, in setting up His tent amongst us, had set up His tent amongst us for evermore. Then, indeed, if ever, was it given to the nations to behold with their own eyes the fulfilment of the tender promise, "I will set my tabernacle in the midst of you, and my soul shall not cast you off. I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people."¹ How sweet, yet how sad too, is it not for us, in this age of ours, when, even by good and godly men Christ's Humanity is relegated to the clouds, as though He, who had once walked this earth of His, were to be forbidden to set foot in it again, to go back in fancy to the days when over this Island of Saints, united in one common creed and held together by one common bond of obedience, He, our High Priest, shed the glory of His presence ! when in every shire a hundred spires,

¹ Lev. xxvi, 11, 12.

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bestudding the countryside, told the wayfarer of the Guest that reposed beneath them ! when Mass was sung in minster, and the sacring-bell tolled out over hill and dale, and the pyx hung in every village church, and the Host was borne with reverent pomp through busy street and peaceful lane, and men knelt as Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, and mothers held up their babes for His blessing ! when all, high and low, flocked to the chancel gates, and partaking together of one Bread, became indeed one body ! Oh, Church of Christ, dwelling-place and temple of God Incarnate, of a truth were thy foundations laid with sapphires, when He, who sits throned upon sapphire above the firmament, set up His abode in thee ! “ And above the firmament that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of the sapphire-stone ; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.”¹ “ Behold I will lay thy foundations with sapphires.”

How Peter and the Mass were cast forth from this land, how the power of jurisdiction, severed from the Apostolate vanished, and how that of order, even if we grant that it survived, was detained in a state of violent and unnatural disjunction, need not again be rehearsed. The future is more to us than the past, and it may even be that the tale has been told with something of needless iteration. For, as it would not be true to say, as every historian abreast with his subject now owns, that the religious changes of the sixteenth century were due to an

¹ Ezechiel. i, 26.

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uprising of the people against the old beliefs and the old Church authority, so it would be unjust of us to feel towards Englishmen of to-day as though they were the authors of those changes, however much the majority approve of them. Many, we know, there are amongst our countrymen who would use the words uttered long ago, though not in the spirit of the first speakers, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets."¹ We are prone to forget, too, that the chief instruments of the changes which we rightly deplore were themselves Catholics, largely the product of an age that was still Catholic; Catholic princes, Catholic nobles, aye Catholic priests, whose hands had received the sacred unction, and who had ministered at the very altars which they afterwards helped to pluck down. Moreover, though it be true that those changes were at first forced upon the great body of the people sorely against their will, and that there was discontent, angry, and deep, and wide, shown in insurrections cruelly repressed, sometimes with foreign aid; though it be true that the old nobility had been mown down, that leaders were lacking, and that such was the confusion of religious thought that many of the poor folk were gradually hoodwinked and cozened out of their birthright; although all this be true, yet, as we view at least the first stages of the long movement, we are compelled to own, that we, who boast of our ancestors' courage, look in vain for the bold Saxon front and the stout Saxon heart in the

¹ Matt. xxxiii, 30.

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great-grandchildren of the men who had fought the great fight at Agincourt. How does their conduct show when contrasted with that of the peasants of La Vendée !

Neither must it be forgotten that, without the persecution which befell her, our English Church, though passing glorious, would have missed her crowning glory, the crown and palm of martyrdom. That gallant band, who laid down their lives to uphold Christ's Kingly and Priestly power in the world, the power of jurisdiction and the power of order bequeathed by Him to His Church, would have been lost to the red-robed company of the Saints. They bled for Peter and the Mass. By this double test they were tried. For stubbornly maintaining these cardinal points of the faith our ancestors were unjustly doomed to imprisonment and fines, to political ostracism and social odium for full two hundred and fifty years. May it not be that the glory which they rendered to God, and the immense stores of virtue which they accumulated by their long-suffering and fidelity to conscience, outweighed in the balance of heaven a sum of merit more widely diffused but far less intense in its actuation ? Even had England's monarchs remained Catholic, had the Second Tudor not revolted, or had the Fifth maintained her sister's work, in all human seeming it is certain that the work of the Lutheran and Calvinistic invasions would have continued. There would have grown up here, as elsewhere, two fiercely opposed parties in the State, divided in religion ; and the Civil War might well have been fought out between

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other camps and under other conditions. Whatever issue the conflict might have had, had we come out of it triumphant, or had we survived as a broken remnant, or had the fruits of the religious and political struggle been divided, we are justified in thinking that in our Catholicity of to-day, in its freedom from State control, in its attachment to Peter and to the Mass, which the noble example of our fathers has ingrained in us so deeply, we possess treasures which many in some countries that are still called Catholic view perhaps with feelings of envy. We possess the strength and cohesion which those two bonds effect, bonds that are forged not of earth, nor can be snapped or loosed by any mere power of earth: and now, moreover, we, together with our brethren in Ireland and in Scotland, are able to stretch out our arms to gather in and embrace in one common fellowship such a glorious, spiritual heritage as our fathers never dreamed of during that long, disconsolate night, when they bowed beneath the storm that well-nigh beat their ancient Churches to earth. "O poor little one, tossed by the tempest, bereft of all comfort, behold I will set thy stones in order, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires."

For the England of to-day, and the British Isles of to-day, are not the England and the British Isles of the Tudors and the Stuarts. The insular epoch of their history is ended, and there has opened the cycle of Empire.

"Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo."

This proud Empire, vaster than that of Augustus

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or Trajan, stronger in its ties, more beneficent in its aims, we too have helped to build up, and we are no aliens. It is an old falsehood and a cunning, that by becoming a Catholic a man forfeits some share of his rightful stake in the common weal. We exist in virtue of no special immunity ; we hold our rights by no man's allowance. We, too, have given this Empire of our brain and our blood. We, too, have had, and have, our sailors, our soldiers, our statesmen, our men of business. We, too, wheresoever the Pax Britannica has been introduced, have penetrated and organized alongside of others, and our Ecclesia Britannica, counting twelve millions of souls, has now its one hundred and forty-six bishops, and its thirty archbishops. Over us, too, the flag ever floats ; over us, too, the sun never sets. Were it not, then, more in keeping with the spirit of this day, when our Mother-Church has been hallowed here in the very heart of Empire, instead of dwelling once again on the wrongs done of old to our fathers here in their narrow home, to extend a brotherly hand and waft a message of love to all our Catholic fellow-subjects, near and far, here and over-seas, and in especial to the metropolitan churches that stretch their arms over Ireland and Scotland, over Canada and Newfoundland, over Australia and New Zealand, over Malta and India, to whom the tidings of this day's doings cannot but be a source of joy ? All of us, in our new Monarch's words, share in " the affectionate loyalty which holds together many lands and diverse peoples in one glorious fellowship." Our allegiance to his laws is whole-hearted and

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sincere. All of us assent to his noble declaration that "freedom, justice, and peace" are the guiding principles of the Empire. In the Catholic Church, diffused throughout his dominions, those principles will ever find an exponent and a guardian, as in times past she has been their faithful custodian. For them her children will contend in the foremost ranks of the fighters. She can aid, as no other body can, in the great work entrusted to our triune races, that of carrying the blessings of peace and civilization to the farthestmost bounds of the earth. For has she not made for peace and civilization in the past—that true peace that is anchored upon things eternal, that uplifting and ennobling civilization that is ever wedded to a spiritual aim? Has she not blessed labour, tilled the soil, fostered the arts, kept alive the lamp of learning, founded universities and schools, formed guilds, and opened homes for the sick and shelter for the aged? Has she not imposed respect for authority and law? Is she not a bulwark against Socialism, the champion of the marriage-tie, the upholder of parental and family right, the foe of restriction of the race? Has she not promoted intercourse between nation and nation, established relations of dependence between them, and, by making war upon the very notion of what is foreign, raised aloft the standard of a pure humanity? Such has been her mission in the past, and such will be her mission in the future; a mission which she is destined to carry to its complete and triumphant fulfilment, when those within her and those without her, bidding adieu to the misunder-

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standings and the bitterness of ages, and owning that in the ranks of either side there has been sin and wrong, will join in the great festival of reconciliation, and hail her alone as spotless and unerring.

But if we are to rise to the full height of the duties which a share in our common Empire lays upon us, if we are to be loyal to the throne, brotherly towards federated races, and to play some part, however small, in a world-wide effort on behalf of the cause of freedom and justice and peace, it behoves us to see that we slacken not the bonds which bind us to a still higher cause, the cause of Him who alone is the source and giver of true freedom, consummate justice, and peace that passeth all understanding. There is another imperialism than that of earth, and a higher, in which that of earth is exalted and ennobled, and transfigured from glory into glory ; and this is the imperialism planted in the world by Him in whom there is " neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian nor Scythian,"¹ by Him who said, " All power is given to me in heaven and on earth : going therefore teach ye all nations, . . . and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."² This is He who was to " rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth "³ ; the " High Priest called by God according to the order of Melchisedech,"⁴ " whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world,"⁵ our King and our

¹ Col. iii, 11.

² Matt. xxviii, 18-19.

³ Psalms lxxi, 8.

⁴ Heb. v, 10.

⁵ John x, 36.

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High Priest in one. To Him, in this His twofold capacity, we have to-day, as to-day's rite taught us, consecrated this Church, and, in consecrating it, we have consecrated ourselves also, and for all time. Within the walls of this Cathedral, in days to come, there will gather the rulers of our Church in England, united with themselves, and united with the laity, the one body built into the Church Universal, which is grounded upon that rock-built See, wherein the fullness of the Apostolate resides, and of which Christ Himself is the primary foundation. Here the Catholics of England will proclaim their unity of faith and identity of communion with the many millions of their brethren who are to be found in every land. Here the Episcopate of England will legislate for their flocks. Here will they profess their unswerving loyalty to the successor of Peter. Here they will accept and will publish his decrees, and in accepting them their words will be no other than the words written in the year 1412 by the Archbishop and Bishops of the Southern Province of England : " On Peter's person (the Son of God) . . . after pouring forth prayers to His Father, most firmly established the Church. For Christ, our Lord and Saviour, attached indeed the pledge of stability in the faith of the office of all the Apostles, yet in such a way as to fix its chief seat in the first of the Apostles only, in the Blessed Peter, and in Peter's successors. From that See, as from the head, were His gifts to flow into the whole body ; so that every one might know himself to be without a share in the communion of those gifts, should he wickedly pre-

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sume to make war upon that rock, which the Divine Builder Himself had laid."¹ At that altar on high festal days, surrounded by his clergy and people, arrayed in attire pontifical, wearing the emblem of metropolitan rank, sent first to England by England's Apostle, Gregory, and using still the words of Gregory's Canon, will stand the Archbishop, the Divine Victim lying mystically slain before him. His prayers and those of his people, mingling with the prayers of Him who is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, will rise up before the throne of the Most High, becoming unto Him as an odour of sweetness, "and the sacrifice of Juda and Jerusalem shall please the Lord as in the days of old, and as in the ancient years."² Those prayers will plead for and will call down freedom and justice and peace, both upon us and upon those who come after us, and not only upon them, but upon all, who, whether here at home, or scattered over our common Empire's broad domain, shall own the sway of the same Keys and shall partake of the same Bread, cleaving to one Chair and one Altar. What historic assemblages may not this building behold, with what a concord of voices may not its walls resound, what a mighty Credo will they not echo, when, it may be many a year hence, they stand in all the richness and glory of their completion, shedding around their calm and mellow glow, and unfolding many a triumph, many a moving picture in the long history of the slow but sure forward march of the

¹ Wilkins, *Concilia*, iii, p. 350.

² Malachy iii, 4.

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people of God ! We can but peer dimly into the future ; but if the Catholic Church, as cannot but be, is not doomed to defeat in the coming struggle with the gathering forces of unbelief, if she is destined once again to play her part as teacher of the nations, and to fulfil her whole divine mission as the regenerator of mankind, it cannot but be that this great temple, consecrated by us to-day, will, in ages to come, stand out as one of those hallowed spots whence her influence will radiate far and wide. Here, as each year revolves, her liturgy, ever ancient, ever new, will appeal to the hearts of thousands of her children. Here her encouragement and blessing and guidance will be given to every kind of good work. Here, above the din of the surge of human opinions, her preachers will deliver in clear, unfaltering tone, the never changing, ever-expanding message of the faith. Here simple hearts, tossed by distress or doubt, and shut off from the eager turmoil of the world beyond, will seek for mercy before the Throne of Grace, and with childlike trust will implore the help of God's sweet Mother and the protection of all the Saints. Hither too, no doubt, in after times, after traversing wide tracts of ocean, will the pilgrim from our Empire's farthest bounds bend his steps, and entering in by that portal, find himself at home. Here, in one of these chapels, he will hear his Mass of thanksgiving, and, in union with " the priest that shall be in those days,"¹ will put up his orison to our most merciful Father on behalf of His holy Catholic Church, that He would " vouchsafe to

¹ Deut. xxvi, 3.

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grant her peace, to shield, unite, and guide her over the whole expanse of earth, together with His servant, our Pope." Our Pope! The very name, uttered here, may perhaps startle him. For it may flash upon him that this is the name, which once, by angry royal decree, was savagely erased from all the missals of England. At once, and at a glance, the scaffold in the Tower, the gallows of Tyburn, the cells of a hundred prisons, will pass rapidly before him; the bloody laws, the firm faith, the dauntless courage, the dreams of approaching relief, the recurring sickness of cheated hopes, the sombre, silent night of semi-extinction and exile, and the long, weary waiting until the coming of the dawn. How fervent, then, will be his thanksgiving that now it is many a year since the old order went its way, and that the Catholics of this land and of the Empire, loyal as ever to the throne, unkind to them no longer, are loyal still to Peter and to the Mass, never flinch in their allegiance to that twofold power, which to them means Christ's empire upon this earth! How will he bless the God of his fathers, "who, after He had been angry, shewed His mercy, and in time of trouble forgave the sins of them that called upon Him"¹; who saved for Himself a remnant of the ancient stock, and bade them fill the land again, clothing the wilderness with bloom, and girding the hills about with joy; who put it into the heart of one of His Anointed to build a temple to His name, and sent him generous friends and a kind, unselfish people to give him wherewithal

¹ Tobit iii, 13.

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to build it ; a temple, fair indeed, and ample, and stately, yet which, at best, is but a poor image of that other one, whose stones Christ, the King, set in order, whose foundations Christ, the Priest, laid with sapphires !

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V

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RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR CANON HOWLETT, D.D.

“Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.”—Mark xvi, 15.

By these words Our Lord imposed on all men the strict obligation of receiving and accepting certain definite doctrines under the gravest penalty—“He that believeth not shall be condemned.” It is contrary alike to the justice and to the wisdom of God that He should impose such an obligation, unless He had provided us with some safe “Rule” or “Method” by which all who sincerely seek the True doctrines of Christ can find them. This is what I mean by the “Rule of Faith.”

No reasonable Christian will deny that any such “Rule” must have these two obvious qualifications:—

I. It must be *secure* and *never-failing*—so as not to be ever liable to lead a sincere enquirer into error, impiety, blasphemy or immorality.

II. This rule or method must be *universal*. That is to say, it must be within reach of all those persons on whom the obligation of receiving the religion of Christ was imposed—namely, “all nations,” “every rational creature.” It must be *universal* therefore,

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firstly, with regard to *place* so as to embrace "all nations"; secondly, with regard to *persons* so as to include "every creature"—young and old, rich and poor, learned or ignorant; and thirdly, with regard to *time*, so as to be accessible to men of all ages for whom those teachings of Christ were intended: "Going therefore teach all nations: . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you *all days, even to the consummation of the world*" (Matt. xxviii, 19 and 20).

So obvious is the need of such a Rule that there is no Christian sect or denomination which has not put forward some sort of Rule or Method, by which it has claimed that its followers could know what they must believe and do to be saved. These Rules may be reduced to three. Two of them are fallacious and lead men into all sorts of error, impiety, blasphemy, or crime. The third is the only true Rule of Faith, the Rule of the Catholic Church. They are:—

1. *Private Inspiration*—or an immediate light, or direct personal communication of God's Spirit, above and independent of the Bible, or of any divinely constituted authority to teach.

2. *The Bible only*. That is to say, the written Word of God, as it is understood and interpreted by each particular reader or hearer of it for himself.

3. The whole Word of God—both written and unwritten (i.e., written in the Bible, and the unwritten word handed down from the Apostles in that great wave of traditional teaching which is in the mind of the Church, and which we call "the deposit of

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Faith ")—as understood and explained to us by the living voice of the Catholic Church to which Christ gave the command to "preach" and to "teach" all nations.

I. FIRST FALLACIOUS RULE OF FAITH.

Private Inspiration, or a sort of immediate, personal, and direct revelation, independent of and above Holy Scripture, by which it is claimed that God makes known to the individual either in prayer, or in reading the Bible, what he must do and believe to be saved. This Rule was adopted by the Montanists, the Anabaptists, the Quakers, the Moravians, and a number of minor sects which sprang into existence after the reformers had sounded the trumpet of rebellion against the divinely established authority of the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century.

This system of teaching vested in individual messengers, as opposed to the corporate method of authoritative teaching, has precedent and analogy entirely against it. God does not regulate the course of the physical world by a series of special interventions. He made it to depend on the operation of a self-acting system. When He created the world, He brought into existence a perfect system of machinery, which, by virtue of inherent powers, would continue to do His work to the end of time. We are justified in looking for something analogous to this in that new spiritual world which Christ established when he founded the Christian Church.

Again, the mission which Christ entrusted to His

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Church could only be accomplished by an organized world-wide institution. As the government of the nations can only be carried on by a system of social organization, so the work entrusted by Christ to His Church can only be accomplished by the institutional as distinguished from the personal method of inculcation.

Who will deny that the object of Our Divine Lord was not only to announce certain definite truths, but to create and promote a definite Christian spirit and character among His followers? To do this through a large body of men, still more throughout a nation, and much more over the whole world, could only be accomplished by an organized society so constituted that it would extend throughout the whole world and endure through all ages. It could not be committed to the issue of isolated communications made to private individuals.

For direct evidence to prove that this Rule could not be a true Rule of Faith, one has only to study the lives of those who adopted it, and who, under its guidance, rushed into excesses of folly, blasphemy and crime. Thus John Bockhold, leader of the German Anabaptists in the sixteenth century, claimed that God had commanded him to teach the true religion and to exterminate the wicked, i.e., all who would not accept his teaching. Under the guidance of his supposed spirit, he married eleven wives (not consecutively), and put them to death, together with many of his subjects, for he had established himself practically King of Munster in Lower Germany.

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Herman, another Anabaptist, taught his followers to exterminate all the priests and magistrates in the world. His battle-cry was, "Kill the priests, kill all the magistrates in the world. Repent : your redemption is at hand."

Yet another Anabaptist, named Nicholas, came over to England to preach the infamous doctrine that "sin is a source of grace."

Without wasting any more time on such fanatics, I need only say that by pursuing a supposed inward light or personal revelation, many men have taught the most blasphemous doctrines and were led into criminal excesses which tended to subvert all social, as well as religious, law and order. In a word, by following phantoms of the imagination for divine illuminations, and a supposed personal revelation for a Rule of Faith, men, who may have been sincere in their fanatical belief, were nevertheless led into impiety, blasphemy and crime. And, as already stated, that cannot be a true Rule of Faith laid down by Our Divine Redeemer, which is liable to lead those who adopt it into such iniquities and excesses.

II. SECOND FALLACIOUS RULE OF FAITH. THE BIBLE ONLY.

Luther and the sixteenth-century Reformers taught that the Bible—the written Word of God—is the Christian's sole guide and Rule of Faith. They rejected the authority of the Pope, the Bishops and the Councils of the Church. "What is the use of reason," says Luther, "if it be not that men may

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judge for themselves. Therefore judge for yourselves, and in spite of popes, and councils, and canons, decide as your reason prompts you." "All men are liars," they proclaimed. "Search the Scriptures," "examine all things," and judge for yourselves. "*The Bible, the Bible only*," said Chillingworth, "is the religion of Protestants."

1. The question is this: Does the Bible reveal all necessary truths to such even as approach its study in a right spirit and with the necessary preparation? In reply I say that its origin and nature, as well as the testimony of history and experience, are overwhelmingly against such an hypothesis. It needs no deep knowledge of the Bible to see that it never was intended, and never could have been intended, to supersede the office of a living and authoritative teacher. It is, of course, the most sacred of all books, containing as it does the inspired Word of God. But no book can be conceived less like a complete formulary of faith. When it has been used as such, and when every irresponsible individual has been encouraged to read into its words any meaning he pleased, it has been a bone of contention among Christians, leading to the confusion of Babel rather than to the unity of Pentecost. Yet God, Who is the author of the Bible, is the author and source not of confusion and discord, but of peace and harmony.

2. If Our Divine Lord had intended the reading of the Bible to be the Christian's sole Rule of Faith, undoubtedly He would have instructed His Apostles on this fundamental doctrine, or at least He would

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not have said anything that would have led us to believe that He had established a totally different Rule. He would have commanded His Apostles to see that all Christians were provided with copies of the Sacred Books, and that they be warned that faith cometh by *reading*. On the contrary, we find that He commands them to "preach the Gospel to every living creature," and to "teach all nations." He said: "He that *heareth* you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me, and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me."

St. Paul, instructing Timothy, the newly appointed Bishop of Ephesus, lays down this rule: "The things which thou hast *heard* of me, the same commend to faithful men who shall be fit to teach others also" (2 Tim. ii, 2). And elsewhere (Rom. x): "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach unless they be sent?" (i.e. duly authorised and commissioned by the Church).

For twenty years after Our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, not a single book of the New Testament was written. The Gospel of St. John was not written until sixty years after. So that if the Bible had been the sole Rule of Faith, the infant Church would have been without any Rule, and consequently without any Faith. No Christian could appeal to it, for the simple reason that it did not exist. The New Testament was not written during Our Lord's lifetime on earth, and nowhere does He refer to it, or even command His Apostles to write it. On the

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contrary, he made His Church a teacher, and gave her the whole world for a school, and man for a pupil.

Moreover, for a thousand years after Our Lord's Ascension, a comparatively few manuscript copies of the books of the New Testament were in existence, and these were not bound together in one volume, and were in the possession of a very limited number of learned men. So far as the masses of the people were concerned, the Bible was inaccessible to them, and even if it had been within their reach, it would have been useless as a Rule of Faith, because they could not read or write. St. Irenæus tells us that whole nations received the faith without being able to read or write. The great bulk of the human race were therefore without a rule of Faith, if the Bible was indispensable, until after the invention of the roller printing press in 1450. Only a religion which came into existence after that great invention, when it became possible to print and circulate the Bible in vast numbers, could possibly make the reading of a book an essential Rule of Faith.

For over one thousand years from Christ's Ascension into heaven, there is no vestige of a record in the history of the Church that the Bible was regarded as a Rule of Faith. There is, on the contrary, a vast accumulation of historical evidence that the appeal of the Christian world was, not to a book, but to the living voice of a divinely established and universally recognized teaching authority in the Church. To that authority St. Augustine appealed against the Manichæan heretics at the beginning of

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the fifth century. " If you say ' do not believe the Catholics ' it will not be right for you to force me to the Faith of Manichæus by means of the Gospel, inasmuch as I believed that very Gospel itself at the teaching of the Catholics. (*Ipsi evangelio Catholicis prædicantibus credidi*) . . . wherefore if you are going to assign me some reasonable proof, set aside the Gospel. If you keep yourself to the Gospel, I will keep myself to those at whose bidding I have believed the Gospel ; and by their command I will not believe you at all." " Now, if it should happen that you could find in the Gospel something most plain concerning the apostleship of Manichæus, you will invalidate in my regard the authority of the Catholics who bid me not to believe you ; and that authority invalidated it will then be out of my power to believe even the Gospel inasmuch as through them I had believed it. . . . But God forbid that I should not believe the Gospel " (*T. VIII, Contr. Epis. Manichæi quam Vocant Fundamenti*, n. 5, 6, col. 268-270).

But let us assume for the sake of argument that the Bible is the Christian's sole Rule of Faith. We can easily put it to the test.

We shall suppose that a Protestant Missioner comes across a man who has heard of Jesus Christ and of His miracles and wants to become a good Christian. The Minister will, according to his theory, present him with a copy of the Bible and bid him read it carefully and prayerfully, and promises that in the process of doing so he will learn all that it is necessary for him to know and do so as to become

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a good practical Christian. But he will warn him that he must judge for himself—he must “search the Scriptures” for his faith, and, above all, he must beware of accepting the word or the teachings of any Pope, or Bishop, or Priest of the Catholic Church. “All men are liars.” “You must not accept the word of any man, but, as our great apostle, Luther, said, ‘Go to the Book, and in spite of Popes, Bishops, Councils and Canons, judge for yourself!’”

Now this man (we’ll call him Jones) has a right to know something about the Book before he places such implicit faith and trust in it. He will naturally ask; “What is this Book?” The Minister will doubtless answer: “It is the inspired Word of God. It contains the writings of the Apostles of Christ, who wrote it under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.” But Jones might say: “The Apostles of Christ lived two thousand years ago. How do I know that they wrote the books of the New Testament? For all that I know they may be forgeries. And even if they did write them, how can I know that the authors were inspired? You tell me that all men are liars, and that I must not believe the Pope, or any Bishop, or Priest. Are you the only man who is not a liar? Must I accept *on your word* that this Book is genuine and inspired?”

He will be told that it has always been accepted as such in the Christian world. But, if so, the Protestant Minister is appealing to the tradition of the Christian world outside the Bible to bolster up his sole Rule of Faith, and tradition is one of the

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things which the Reformers warned their followers not to accept.

If, however, Jones follows the advice of the Reformers "examine all things" so as to judge for himself, he will have to begin by undertaking the tremendous task, if he has the necessary qualifications, of making a critical study of the Bible back through two thousand years to ascertain whether or not the Book is genuine. He will, in the process, discover many things that should tend to shake his faith in the Bible as an infallible guide and an indispensable Rule of Faith. For instance, he will come to a period when the world was flooded with writings, all of them put forward as inspired scripture. In the second and third centuries these writings were mixed up with the genuine inspired books of the New Testament. Some of them were read in the Churches and accepted by learned and holy men as being genuine and inspired. There were—to mention only a few—the Epistle of Barnabas, the two Epistles of Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Apocalypse of St. Peter, the Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias and of Nicodemus, the Protevangelium of James (read publicly in some of the Eastern Churches), and the *Evangelium Infantiae Salvatoris*, containing legendary miracles of Christ's infancy. Now all these books have disappeared from the Canon of the New Testament, and are regarded as spurious literature. Why? Because the Pope and his Council, exercising the divine commission and authority to "teach all nations," took all those books, both spurious and genuine, in hand to

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examine them. He selected some and declared them to be genuine and inspired—the rest he rejected as spurious.

The Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. Mark and St. John he pronounced to be genuine and inspired scripture. The Gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias and Nicodemus he rejected as spurious. So that Jones will have another important question for his Protestant instructor. It is this: When the Pope made that selection of books which constitute what is now accepted as the Bible, was he or was he not infallible? If he was *not* infallible, he may have made serious mistakes. He may have rejected books that were really genuine and inspired, and accepted others which were spurious forgeries. If so, of what use is the Bible to Jones as a Rule of Faith? But if the Pope was infallible, then the Rule of the Catholic Church must be the right Rule of Faith.

Even if he can satisfy himself that the writings which make up the Bible are *genuine*, i.e. that each book was written by the author to whom it is attributed—he has yet to prove that they are *inspired*, namely, that when the authors to whom they are attributed wrote those books they did so under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. How can he prove this if he rejects the infallible teaching authority of the Pope and of the Church of which the Pope is the supreme head?

Let us go a step further and assume that by some process, Jones satisfies himself that the Bible is both genuine and inspired. He has yet to be certain that

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when he reads it he can understand it, so as to be able to correctly formulate his creed. This is most important, for it is not the mere words but the meaning behind the words that constitutes the Christian's creed. Words are the expression of thoughts in the mind. The Word of God is the expression of truths in the mind of God. Those truths were communicated to the inspired writers, and they committed them to words in the Bible. In reading those words does Jones grasp their meaning? Does he fully understand the truths which the writer intended to convey?

It is admitted by the most learned Protestant Biblical scholars, that there is no more difficult, obscure, or perplexing book in existence than the Bible. It contains metaphors, types, allegories, parables, and obscure expressions that have puzzled men who have devoted their whole lives to Biblical study. St. Jerome, the greatest of all Biblical scholars, admitted that it contained many things which even he could not understand. Does Jones understand it? There is no text in it relating to any doctrine that has not been differently interpreted. Can he determine which is the correct version?

It is admitted that to interpret and understand the Bible correctly and wisely, one should have, among other requisites: (1) the knowledge of various languages; (2) extensive learning; (3) wisdom, judgment and piety. How many of those who are asked to use the Bible as a Rule of Faith, have all or any of these qualifications? Is it not absolute

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folly, not to say impiety, to distribute the Bible indiscriminately among the vulgar and illiterate, and invite them to put their own interpretation and construction on what admittedly they cannot understand or explain? If they attempt to draw their creed from it, they find that the result differs immensely from what others, better qualified than they, have drawn from the same source.

Yet the Holy Ghost who inspired the Bible cannot contradict Himself. Two things must impress Jones after all his investigations. Firstly, that from the Reformation to the present day *variation* and contradiction have been the chief characteristics of all who have regarded the Bible as the Christian's sole Rule of Faith, in spite of the fact that truth cannot vary, and therefore what varies cannot be true or divine. Secondly, that it is from the hand of the Catholic Church that we have received the Bible, and on her infallible authority alone we know that it is both genuine and inspired. He must, therefore, conclude that the only true Rule of Faith is the divinely instituted teaching authority of the Catholic Church—at whose bidding we believe the Bible, and from whose lips we receive the whole Word of God, written and unwritten—interpreted for us by the living and infallible voice of that Church to which Christ gave the command: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every living creature—he that heareth you heareth Me."

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

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VI

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

REV. RONALD A. KNOX

"He was wounded for our iniquities ; He was bruised for our sins ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed."—Isaiah liii, 4.

WHEN you sit watching some great tragedy being performed on the stage, what is it that so thrills you, so carries you out of yourself? Why do you find yourself, at the end of an act, with a lump in your throat and the tears standing in your eyes—realize suddenly that you have been forgetting yourself, and crying without knowing it? After all, it is only a play ; there is no reality in it. When you come to think of it, you know that the threatening noise of the mob outside the windows was really produced by one or two stage hands ; you know that the actor who has just left the stage is quietly smoking a cigarette behind the scenes. What is it that has created the illusion? Is it true to say, as some people will say, that you have been imagining yourself, all the time, standing on the stage and taking a part in the action, and so interesting yourself in the characters? I don't think that's it ; after all, you can get very much the same effect by reading a book that really grips you, or even, if you are musical, by listening to some sad piece of music. No, great art does not produce its effect by

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making you imagine you were really there ; it is something subtler than that.

A great picture, a great musical composition, a great book, but more than any of these a great tragedy on the stage, affects you because it stands for a type of all the sorrows of the world, all the doubtful doom of human kind. The stage is only paste-board, and the ornament of it is gimcrack ornament, the actors are only pretending ; the story is a story which never happened—there is no need to cry over it. But it does manage to touch a chord in you which thrills in response, simply because it represents the sadness of our common, human lot, sadness you have felt in your own life, and will feel again. *Romeo and Juliet* is not the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, it is the eternal tragedy of blighted love. *Hamlet* is not the tragedy of *Hamlet*, it is the eternal tragedy of human indecision. *King Lear* is not the tragedy of *King Lear*, it is the eternal tragedy of man's ingratitude. Great Art represents for us by a single instance, a single imaginary instance, some eternal problem, some constantly repeated situation, and claims our tears not for this hero or heroine, not for this plot or this story, but for the eternal motive which underlies them all.

And when we set before our minds, year by year, the picture of that great tragedy which was enacted on the scene of Calvary, we are more privileged spectators still. Partly because this is no imaginary record, but a record of plain fact, handed down to us by its historians without circumstance or ornament—a piece of history just as much as the *Battle of*

Hastings. But partly because this historical tragedy does not merely represent for us, as other great tragedies may, the sins and the sorrows of the world. It is not a mere imaginary instance which illustrates their meaning. It does actually sum up, does actually contain within itself, all the sins and all the sorrows of the world. It does not merely remind us of the torments which the world's martyrs have endured ; it includes them. It does not merely illustrate the great injustices of the world, it contains them. Jesus Christ hanging upon His Cross is the Head of our redeemed Humanity ; and all the world's sins are His punishment, and all the world's sorrows are His Crown.

I have called this great event in history a tragedy ; and when I call it that I do not mean simply that it was unfortunate, that it was pathetic, that it moves us to tears and to horror. A railway accident may move us to tears and to horror, but it is not a tragedy, because it is without plot and without motive ; it is (for us at any rate) meaningless. There is no interplay between different human characters, no moral struggle, no reaction of man upon his fate. A tragedy in the true sense (as opposed to the newspaper sense) means something much more complicated than that. It means that the hero, although he is a man who claims our interest and our admiration, has some weakness, some blind spot in his nature which involves him in the train of circumstance that is to bring about his downfall. It means that the other characters in the story, who are concerned in his downfall, are human agents in-

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fluenced by human motives, all of which contribute to the tragic result. It means that the unhappy ending is foreseen from the first, and yet might have been averted at any point, if only things had fallen out a little differently.

Why then, you say, the story of Calvary cannot be a tragedy ; for the Hero of it had not, could not have, any weakness or any blind spot in His nature. That is true, but all the same there is a peculiarity in his situation which does duty instead. He wanted to die. *Oblatus est quia ipse voluit* ; He wanted to die. Not of course by compassing His own death ; not of course by doing anything that deserved death ; not by putting any pressure upon the human wills that confronted Him. All through the story His enemies are free agents, and yet they are seconding His resolve. All through the story He is in a position to save Himself, and yet he refuses. Even with human powers Jesus Christ could, if He would, have defeated the ends of His persecutors. He could have hidden Himself on Maundy Thursday, instead of keeping an appointment with the traitor in Gethsemane ; he makes no such attempt. He is taken before the High Priest ; the case against Him has broken down for want of witnesses. The proceedings will fall to the ground, if only He will continue to keep silence. And then the High Priest asks Him who He is ; here it is that silence will save Him, and—He speaks. He is taken before the Roman Governor, who has no grudge against Him, no desire to condemn Him. He has only to explain the exact nature of the claim He puts forward ; the Roman Governor may take

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Him for a madman, but he will let Him go free. This time speech would save Him, and—He keeps silence. All through the story you can never say that His tragedy is His own fault; yet at every turn you must admit that it is His own doing.

And, of course, there is far more behind it when you remember that he was Omnipotent God. When you remember that the Angel legions, as He Himself said, were ready to interfere and deliver Him, waiting, hand on scabbard, for His word of command, only He never gave it. He could have smitten His captors with blindness; He could have shaken off the bonds and flung back the doors of His prison; He could have come down from His Cross; but He would not. He prayed, in Gethsemane, that the Chalice might pass from Him, because it was being mingled for Him by human treachery and human sin. But although He prayed that it might pass from Him, He would not put out a hand to thrust it aside. It is His resolve to die.

And meanwhile, though the pity and the horror of that scene may overcome us, that is not all. It is right that pity and horror should be our first instinct as we watch the tragedy of Calvary. But do not let us forget that this greatest of all tragedies is also the strangest of all tragedies. It is a tragedy with a happy ending. And every stage in the story brings that happy ending nearer. With every blow of the hammer, with every moment of the anguish, take heart, Christians! We are nearer to the salvation of the world.

So much for the Hero of Calvary; and now for

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the villains. It was not a single human will, but a complication of human wills, that brought our Lord to His death—the greed of Judas, the hatred of Caiphas, the cowardice of Pilate. If all those had not combined there would not have been any Crucifixion. Shall we put them on their trial, one by one, and see how easily each of the three can claim that the fault lies with the others, rather than with himself?

Put Judas on his trial first. “Yes,” he will tell you, “I don’t deny my fault: I betrayed Him. But would I have betrayed Him, if the Jews hadn’t been determined, already, to destroy Him? Would I have made the infamous offer, if I hadn’t been sure, beforehand, that there was a market for it? The guilt of murder lies in the intention, not in the act; why, then, the Jews were murderers already, before I ever gave them their opportunity. For weeks past the Pharisees had been plotting how best to get rid of their enemy without arousing the indignation of the people. What did I do, then, except perhaps put a match to the train of hatred, long since laid and already smouldering, that must in any case have resulted in a crucifixion at last?

“Besides, what did I do? I only showed them where he was to be found at a particular time; they could have found out for themselves easily enough. And I may have handed Him over to arrest, but I never handed Him over to death! Never! How was I to know that His captors would want His blood? How was I responsible for the mockery of justice which condemned Him? How could I even

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be certain (for I had lived so long with Him, and seen Him perform the most extraordinary miracles) —how could I be certain that He would allow Himself to be killed? It was not His death I contemplated, and if you want proof of that here it is: as soon as I heard He was condemned to death I went into the temple, back to the chief priests, and flung the thirty pieces of silver in their faces! Hold me guilty of treason if you will, but never say that I planned a murder."

That's Judas's case, and it is not altogether an unreasonable one, is it? Now put Caiphas on his trial, representing the chief priests. "Oh," he says, "I quite admit that the driving force in the prosecution came from us. Judas wouldn't have been a traitor if we hadn't put a premium on treachery, and Pilate wouldn't have failed in his duty if we hadn't intimidated him. We did desire the death of the Prisoner. But that desire of ours would have remained ineffective if we hadn't had bad luck! How many crimes would be done in the world, if our wishes all came true! We wanted to kill Him, but we lacked the opportunity: our counsels were divided and ineffective, until—until the door of our conclave opened at dead of night and the cursed face of the traitor looked in! When he offered us just what we wanted, just at the moment when we wanted it, is it wonderful that we closed with his offer—and so cheap! It would have been hardly human to resist such a bargain. And so the Prisoner fell into our hands; now we had got Him in our power, now we could do what we liked with Him!

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“ But no, we couldn’t ! *We* hadn’t any power of life and death. The Romans had taken away that right from us ; we were free to pass a verdict, but not to pronounce a sentence. To the Roman Governor, then, our Prisoner had to go, before anything could be actually done. We insisted, we clamoured for an execution—but the decision, after all, lay with him. He had no reason to be frightened of us, as he sat there, hedged about by his legionaries. It was his office to judge ; he had been trained in Roman law, the greatest school of law the world has ever seen ; he was in a responsible position, the representative of the august Cæsar ; he was unprejudiced ; he was in full possession of the facts ; he was in no hurry, and—he gave way ! Surely, if there is any meaning in the idea of government at all, the Roman Governor ought to have acted as a check to our hatred, as a brake on our impetuous career. Instead, he gave way ! Blame us if you will for the fury which crucified the Christ, but don’t forget Judas, the switch (as it were) which liberated the current of that fury ; don’t forget Pilate, the brake (as it were), which should by rights have checked that fury, yet failed, at the last moment, to act ! ”

So the case for the chief priests is concluded ; and now Pilate must come down from his tribunal and stand in the dock. “ Yes,” he says, “ it’s all true, but you’ll find, if you look at my situation more closely, that there were extenuating circumstances about it. I *was* in a responsible position ; I was, on paper, in a position which gave me no cause for

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alarm. But, remember, I hadn't been very popular as a Governor; certain punitive measures which I had been forced to take against the Galileans had produced a good deal of bad feeling. Sooner or later I must be recalled to Rome, and if I went back to Rome leaving a bad name in my province, there was sure to be danger. The Jews are powerful at Rome, and life is cheap there. I did have to think twice before I refused a request upon which the whole body of the chief priests was determined. They had a law, they said, and by their law He ought to die—well, how could I be expected to know the *minutiæ* of their legal code? They said so: Caiphas, a level-headed man, a statesmanlike leader said so: was it wonderful if I believed them? It seemed odd to me, but I supposed they knew their own business.

“They say I ought to have acted as a check on them, and failed so to act. Will they do me the justice to remember that, not once but three times, I implored them to reconsider their request? That I offered to release the Christ, and they chose Barabbas? That I scourged the Christ, hoping thus to glut their resentment, and they still cried, ‘Crucify Him!’? That I washed my hands, and protested that I was innocent, and they answered, His blood be upon us, and upon our children? Yes, I was swept off my feet, but it takes a brave man not to be swept off his feet by the howling of a mob. Yes, I was vanquished by their persistency, but it takes a man of rare character to stick to his point when he is wearied out by importunacy. I signed

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the warrant, and the soldiers acted under my orders. But the guilt? Others have dipped their hands deeper in the Precious Blood than I."

You see, they are none of them guilty! Each of them can shift the blame on to the others! Yet there He hangs, the supreme Victim of a world's injustice, betrayed, persecuted, condemned! Someone traced those cruel scars across His shoulders, someone plaited that mocking crown of thorn, someone drove in those hard nails through the twitching Hands and the quivering Feet. Someone has thrust the last sword through the Virgin-Mother's Heart, someone has taken away her Master from the Magdalene. Will you persuade *them* that it was an unfortunate incident, but nobody is altogether to blame?

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: when you and I, by giving deliberate consent to a mortal sin, repeat in our own lives the guilt of Calvary, we also re-enact, upon the dimly-lit scene of our own consciences, the tragedy of Calvary. We too have our Judas, our Caiphas, our Pilate to reckon with. There can be no mortal sin without that.

Your Judas is the occasion of sin. The occasion of sin. The infamous offer of Judas came to the chief priests just at the moment when they wanted it. The occasion of sin comes to you just when you are in the mood for it, just at the moment when it seems attractive. How should it be otherwise? Do you suppose that the devil wastes his time putting temptations in our way at the moment when temptation would have no appeal? Will he

tempt us to theft when we are rich, or to incontinence when we are in bad health, or to suicide when we are cheerful? Of course not: in his economy the demand creates the supply, just as the demand for a traitor made a traitor of Judas. The occasion of sin comes to us just at the moment when it is dangerous, just at the moment when it appeals.

Your Caiphas is passion. Just as the chief priests had for long been seeking for an opportunity to destroy Jesus Christ, but hitherto their desire had been vague and ineffective, waiting for the psychological moment which would give it free play, so it is with your passions. They have long been surging, undisciplined, in your heart; you have neglected prayer and the Sacraments, you have failed to guard your eyes and thoughts, your passions, consequently, are all uncontrolled. And when they are at their height, the traitor makes his appearance at the door. The occasion of sin offers, and between it and your passions the treacherous bargain is struck. You are prepared to crucify your God.

Is that mortal sin? No, not yet. There still remains one possible check, one further court of appeal. That check is your reason, your practical reason, which we sometimes loosely call, your will. That is Pilate, your practical reason. Without its consent, the verdict of your unruly passions cannot take effect. But they surge around it, clamouring, insisting, demanding to be gratified. It can still say no; there is still the hope that grace will interfere. But whereas, ordinarily, your practical reason can see straight and judge true, at these moments

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when passion is surging in your heart it weakens, its vision is distorted, it is in danger of being overthrown. It parleys with your passions ; it puts up a show of resistance, but it is ineffective, merely formal resistance. And at last, your reason gives its consent : " Very well, then," it says to passion, " have it your own way." And with that, the decree is signed. The putting of the sinful thought into act—that is merely automatic, like the proceedings of the Roman soldiers, acting under Pilate's orders. The guilt of mortal sin is there, even if, through some accident, the deed is balked of its fulfilment. Who shall say which is more to be blamed ; the occasion of sin that found you out, or the passions which responded to it, or the practical reason which failed to check you ? No matter : you have pierced the heart of Christ.

And all the time He gives Himself, an acquiescent prisoner, into your hands. As He allowed Himself to be crucified by Pilate, as He allows Himself to be blasphemed and dishonoured in the Blessed Sacrament, so He dwells in your heart when you are in a state of grace, ready to be betrayed, and persecuted, and condemned. His grace will warn you, plead with you, protest to you, but He will not overpower your freedom of decision. He gives Himself into your hands. You are no spectator, then, of the tragedy on Calvary. You are Judas, Caiphas and Pilate, all in one, if you have the heart to rewrite that tragedy in your own name

THE FOUNDATION STONE

VERY REV. RICHARD DOWNEY, D.D., PH.D.

VII

THE FOUNDATION STONE¹

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TO-DAY we are met together at the making of history, to assist at the laying of the foundation stone of the College Chapel by His Grace the Archbishop of Liverpool, of whose one increasing purpose the three wings of St. Edward, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bede, added consecutively during his episcopate, are abiding witnesses in stone. After four years of building, this noble seat of learning is to receive its crowning glory ; its arches are to be linked up, as it were, with the very vault of heaven, for full well we know

“ Too low they build who build beneath the stars.”

I can think of no text more appropriate to this inspiring occasion than the words of that great prophet of old whose lips had been touched with a burning coal taken from the altar : “ Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is My throne, the earth is My footstool, where then is the house that ye build for Me, where is the place of my rest ? ”

In these impassioned words the prophet Isaiah is striving to bring home to the narrow-minded Jews the great central fact of the immensity and ubiquity

¹ Sermon preached at the laying of the foundation stone of the Upholland College Chapel on July 26, 1927.

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of God. He is everywhere, all-pervading, all-sustaining, so much so that the whole created universe can furnish only the merest accessories of His majesty. The boundless blue heaven above serves but as His throne, whilst the earth and the fullness thereof is no more than His footstool.

Each and every one of us has, at some time or other, experienced a sense of the divine immanence in Nature when, perhaps, we have sailed across the ocean main, or wandered in a pine forest, or scaled a mountain peak ; we have realized in a flash of intuition that the whole of Nature is one vast cathedral of the Almighty.

And so, taught by Nature, men first worshipped in the great open spaces, or on the mountain-tops highest to the heavens, or in the sacred groves, the shrines of Nature's own making : for the earth is His footstool. But it was necessary that He should have a temple made with hands where men could worship in season and out of season ; hence, says the Lord by the mouth of the prophet, " where is the house that ye build for Me ? "

That house was at first a humble abode, the one stone building amidst huts and watlings. Gradually the temples made with hands became more elaborate, more stately, more dignified, more worthy of the great God of heaven and earth, till we reach the culminating point of beauty and majesty in Solomon's temple. Look upon it in all its glory, with its pinnacles flashing in the sunlight without : and within, its galaxy of precious stones, of jasper, sapphire, onyx and every rarest gem ; its layers upon

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layers of cypress wood, acacia and wild olive ; and its ornaments of burnished gold in the midst of a sea of molten brass in the Holy of Holies. Look upon it in all its splendour, and see in it the answer of God's people to the vital question, " Where is the house that ye build for Me, where is the place of My rest ? "

And yet in that temple of old, God was present only by His power, in a very special way, it is true, but nevertheless only in a spiritual manner ; in the Christian temple He is really and truly present, abiding with us in the sacrament of His love. So much does the Christian temple excel the temple of the Old Dispensation, by reason of the divine indwelling, that St. Paul, by one of those rapid transitions of thought so characteristic of him, boldly applies the figure of the temple to the Christian soul, and makes it the basis of an argument for personal sanctification.

" Know you not that you are the temple of God ? " says St. Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. iii, 16). How astonished these neophytes must have been at the daring of this utterance and at its depth of meaning. For St. Paul certainly did not mean that the Corinthians were the temple of God only in the same way that the whole of Nature, animate and inanimate, is the temple of God : nor did he mean that they were temples of God in the more restricted sense in which all men are temples of God, because of the likeness to God in the rational soul.

He meant much more than that : he meant that Christians, as such, were temples of God in an exclusive manner. We can have little doubt as to his

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meaning if we read his own account of the Last Supper in which he describes how " the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said : take ye, and eat : this is My body, which shall be delivered for you : this do for the commemoration of Me " (1 Cor. xi, 23-24). The early Christians simply carried out the command of the Divine Master, and they became living temples of God. For it is the Eucharist, sacrifice and sacrament, which gives to the Christian temple its special sanctity and significance.

Hence it was that in the ages of faith whole families toiled with unremitting labour through centuries to build those miracles of grace and beauty, the great Gothic cathedrals. We know how the building of a single arch, the carving of one giant pillar, was handed on in a family, from father to son, throughout generations. It was a matter of painstaking effort in the service of God, without the stimulus of human reward ; for it was a prime condition of cathedral building to sink one's individuality for the good of the whole. Even the names of the architects who designed these masterpieces in stone are for the most part unknown to us.

Of late years, both in this country and in America, appeals have been made to all sorts and conditions of men, to put their religious beliefs in the background and unite in restoring or in building anew some great ecclesiastical edifice, in the name of social service, good citizenship, or universal brotherhood. These things are excellent in their way, but let us be under no delusion : neither singly nor

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collectively did they constitute the animating principle of the great cathedral builders of the past. When the historic cathedrals of Europe were built, all those who had any hand or part in the matter were united in one thing, precisely the thing that is lacking in the modern spirit of cathedral builders ; they were united in one common faith, in a faith which pervaded the very atmosphere in which they lived, which was the breath of their nostrils, which sent the rich warm blood tingling through their veins, and moved them to high endeavour.

A common faith was the mainspring of common action. The whole community worked in unison precisely because the whole community was moved by the same faith. There were diversities of operations, but the same spirit working all in all ; and hence when, in the twelfth century, the cathedral of Chartres was burnt to the ground, as soon as the news spread, whole populations stopped their regular work, left their homes, and begged to be employed in any capacity whatsoever in the rebuilding of their beloved cathedral. The records of the period tell how the rich stripped themselves of their finery and jewellery, and even mortgaged their lands, to provide the requisite funds ; and how the poor willingly gave up their scant leisure to the labour of love.

The whole populace became hewers of wood and drawers of water. Every man sought to have a hand in restoring the temple of God, and he was permitted to do so only if he led a life worthy of the Christian profession ; the only drones were those who were deemed unworthy of rendering service, If

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anything is clear in history it is that the great cathedrals of the thirteenth century are abiding expressions of the one common and abounding faith which pervaded all classes of society prior to the disruption of Western Christendom. There was nothing hazy about that faith. It was not a sort of vague belief in the refining influence of Christianity, or in the uplifting value of the Sermon on the Mount : it was the unconditional acceptance of the deposit of revealed truth committed to the Apostles and their successors.

These mediaeval cathedrals were built in the Golden Age of Catholicism, in an age of the faith that moves mountains, and therefore in an age of heroic achievement. The thirteenth century witnessed the last of the crusades which had brought about a fruitful interchange of thought and action between East and West, thereby enlarging men's vision and liberating their minds. It was ripe, too, intellectually, to receive the newly discovered works of Aristotle and inaugurate the greatest philosophical revival that the world has ever known. It produced the sublime poet of Catholicism, Dante, who, as he tells us himself, wrote " the sacred poem to which heaven and earth put their hands." At this period, too, the schools which had been founded for the education of the masses developed into the great mediaeval universities, including both Oxford and Cambridge.

Nor was it merely an age of intellectualism : the fervent piety of that same spacious epoch gave birth to the great religious orders of St. Dominic and

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St. Francis, which produced men who, whilst as scholars engraving their names with pen of adamant on tablet of brass, ministered faithfully to the spiritual and temporal wants of the poor. The spirit which gave rise to the mendicant orders, which founded and consolidated the universities, which moulded scholasticism into a perennial philosophy, and which found its synthetic expression in the theology of Aquinas ; that same spirit wrought and chiselled itself in wood and stone at Salisbury, Lincoln, Ely, York, and many another hallowed spot in this land, as a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

Why did your ancestors build these cathedrals thus glorious and magnificent ? Not, I assure you, to be mere places of prayer-meeting and psalm-singing : not for that did they build them thus glorious and magnificent ; but because they believed in the living presence of the living God upon the Christian altar ; therefore did they build them thus glorious and magnificent, to be, as it were, the outer shell enshrining the God incarnate in the place of His rest.

Sometimes, as you have wandered about the country, you have come across the ruins of some old pre-Reformation church, and as you have looked upon those ruins you have marvelled at what must have been the ancient splendour of that temple of God : and you have marvelled still more to find so vast an edifice in such sequestered spots as Crediton, Beverley or Ripon. Not infrequently the explanation of the disproportion between the church and the district is to be found in one short sentence in the guide-book : “ This church was once collegiate.”

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What a wealth of information is here unfolded. That magnificent edifice was once a college chapel ! Yes, for in the days when such chapels were built, the college was meant to be the source not merely of intellectual, but also of spiritual life : “ they dreamt not of a perishable home who thus could build.” The college was no mere academic institution remote from the lives of the people ; it was the spot sacred to thought and God, where the children of the people grew in wisdom and grace, the hallowed place where their children’s children would learn the love of faith and fatherland, and so it came about that oftentimes the college chapel overshadowed the parish church.

This England of ours is peculiarly the home of the collegiate chapel. No country in the world can boast such superb examples as are to be found at King’s College, Cambridge, or at Merton College, Oxford, or at many another ancient college in the older universities. Their spaciousness and grandeur made them specially suitable for the choral recitation of the Divine Office and for the due performance of the ceremonial of the Church. They were the answer of the whole community, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, to the question, “ Where is the house that ye build for Me, where is the place of My rest ? ”

And in this they were true to an older tradition. We know how the earlier schools were linked up with the cathedral or the monastery, and how all branches of secular knowledge were regarded as so many stepping-stones to the knowledge of God and the things of God. These schools went through many

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vicissitudes before they were finally swept away by the rising tide of university life in the thirteenth century. For a time all was chaos : for the earliest universities were not founded on any definite plan, but grew up spontaneously, often without proper supervision, and consequently some of them soon became breeding-places of scandals and excesses.

As a reaction against this evil, in the fourteenth century, a new type of college, destined ere long to become national in the sense of peculiar to, and characteristic of, this country, as our English public school, was brought into being by an illustrious member of the English hierarchy, one of the greatest educationists of all time, William of Wykeham. Great statesman and man of affairs as he was, he set his august seal to the despised principle of the old monastic schools, that intellectual schooling, when divorced from moral and religious training, is no education at all.

In the twin colleges which he founded at Oxford and Winchester, he aimed first of all at the co-ordination of studies, at the dovetailing of the grammar school and the university, so that the entire course culminated in the faculty of theology, the Queen of the Sciences, as it was called. Hence the outstanding feature of the Wykehamist colleges was the chapel, a chapel which in many cases dwarfed the school buildings into comparative insignificance. Soon Wykeham's colleges came to be regarded as models for all subsequent foundations, and schools with wondrous chapels were established in great numbers throughout the length and breadth of

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England till the dark days of the Reformation dawned.

These collegiate chapels were conceived in a spirit of boundless generosity towards God, and executed with a splendour and munificence which leaves the modern mind amazed. Who is there who has not marvelled at the beauty of these old grey collegiate churches? As we have looked at the majestic carvings of the oaken roof, or at the chaste design of the rood-screen, or at the noble sweep of giant arches, or at the delicate tracery of the floriated crosses, we have been forced, even the most prosaic of us, to realize something of the spirit of liberality and the sense of dignity which animated their builders.

They were built to afford the amplest opportunities of divine worship at its best and highest in the sacred liturgy of the Church. The chapel was the very soul of the college, quickening every department and every faculty into spiritual life, so that those who graduated within the college walls went forth to illumine the minds and enkindle the hearts of their fellow-men with the knowledge and the love of God.

Alas, from the old collegiate chapels of this land the glory has departed; the ark of God has been taken away; they are no longer sanctuaries of the abiding presence. But to-day is a day on which the mighty spirits of their magnanimous founders must rejoice in heaven. This is a day of restoration, a day when there is laid the foundation stone of just such a chapel as was contemplated by William of Wykeham and his Catholic successors, a chapel attached to a college for daily, and even hourly use; a chapel which is not merely the house of the Lord,

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but, in deed and in truth, the place of His rest.

Since the restoration of the Hierarchy in this country, new Sees have taken the place of those long lost to us, new parish churches have replaced the old, and now there dawns a renaissance wherein we may hope to restore to this land seats of Catholic culture and piety in continuity with the famed schools of bygone days. Once again a glorious chapel is to give life, inspiration and meaning to the towers, cloisters and halls of an English college. Once again learning and liturgy shall furnish the place of His rest.

Very fittingly this chapel is to be dedicated to the great St. Joseph, to whose guardianship our high priest, Christ Jesus, was entrusted during the tender years of His boyhood and of His preparation for the ministry. May that same guardianship of the foster-father of Jesus be extended to those who, under his patronage and within these walls, strive to become imitators of Christ in His priestly character.

May this chapel of Upholland, like the college which it completes, be a fitting expression of the dignity and nobility of the Christian profession ; may it, in awakening echoes of the past, revive some of the traditional splendour of the English college chapels of old ; and, above all, may it be worthy of its sacred purpose to foster the Apostolic spirit in those who, throughout ages yet to come, when the walls which are not yet built have been mellowed by the unimaginable touch of time, shall go forth from its sanctuary priests for ever according to the order of Melchisedech.

ZEAL FOR THE SANCTIFICATION OF
CHILDREN

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR KOLBE, D.D.
(Cape Town)

VIII

ZEAL FOR THE SANCTIFICATION OF CHILDREN

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR KOLBE, D.D.
(Capetown)

“ They that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity.”—Daniel xii, 3.

THE flames that surmount the symbol of the Sacred Heart are a sign to us that this devotion is pre-eminently one of zeal. Zeal may be defined as an ardent desire and endeavour to make God known and loved, and to procure for others the grace of salvation and all spiritual good things. This, as a desire, is doubtless in all our hearts, but it does not amount to zeal unless it is ardent in its quality, and effectual in its outcome. It is the nature of fire to be hot, and to burn. A desire of salvation for others which stirs us up to no action and produces no fruit outside of ourselves has not in itself sufficient fire for us to call it zeal. We are not true clients of the Sacred Heart of Jesus if we are not animated by this ardent and effective fire of zeal. It may be said to me that we have some control over the actions of our own heart and therefore can make our desire ardent, but having no control over external circum-

A sermon preached during the month of the Sacred Heart to a congregation consisting mainly of teachers.

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stances, we are not able to guarantee that such zeal as we have shall be effectual. I do not ask you to guarantee it. I simply say that where there is true zeal, it will certainly produce some effect. Therefore I repeat that the ardour of our desire is a quality of which we must be conscious before we can feel that we have true zeal, and that external effectiveness is a test which we must apply in order to prevent self-deception and to keep us in the right spirit of humility.

Our primary motive is to be found in the words of our Lord : " Inasmuch as you did it to one of these little ones, you did it unto me." Those who consecrate themselves to God do not become Religious in order to teach, or to be employed in any other external occupation, but in order to be Brides of Christ and to devote themselves entirely to Him. To such souls an occupation is of value only in so far as we can see Him in it, and we may say at once that there is nothing in which Christ is more visible than in the duty of guarding and developing the innocence and the holiness of children.

The whole meaning of our Lord's life is, in His own words, " I have come to kindle a fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be enkindled ? " And what means has He of kindling this fire except through the hearts of those who are already enkindled by nearness to Him ? Whoever has any of this sacred fire in his breast is under a solemn obligation to spread it in the breasts of others. God is infinitely desirous of working endless miracles of grace, but he has left Himself in the world no other means of

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working these miracles than through those who have already shared them. Those to whom I am speaking have in the souls of the little children entrusted to them the aptest of all material for fuel for the sacred fire. The priest who goes forth on a sometimes almost hopeless mission of bringing back to paths of rectitude obstinate and hardened sinners, is oppressed by the thought of the many obstacles in his way before the fire of divine love can really touch the hearts of those for whom he is zealous. The wood he wants to burn is sodden with the moisture of this world : but little children, fresh from the grace of baptism, are quick in their responsiveness to the least approach of this fire of zeal. They are like the tinder which the least spark can enkindle. It is a pitiful sight to see all the materials necessary for the formation of a saint laid above a child's heart, with the flint and steel of grace ready to our hand, God pleading with us to use our opportunity, the angels almost impatient that the work is left to us instead of to themselves, and we too hampered by sloth to have the energy to strike. If we could make a mental picture to ourselves every morning, before coming into contact with these dear little ones of God, of the burning anxiety in heaven above us to see the sparks flying from our souls to theirs, we could never rest with cold satisfaction on mere formal prayers and heartless catechism. For what other purpose did we sacrifice earthly fatherhood and motherhood, but that we might have a larger and deeper freedom of sharing in the divine maternity ? A mother having once given of her very life and substance to her child,

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from thenceforward, by natural instinct, keeps on as it were trying to send her heart after herself in that child. If she does not, we call her unnatural. What shall we say of those who neglect or ignore the supernatural instincts of spiritual motherhood? The whole plan of the Incarnation culminates in the identifying of human love with divine, and the measure of our love for the God whom we do not see is the activity of our love for the children of God whom we do see.

Another motive is that of anxiety. We must bear always in mind the terrible risk which children run if they are not well grounded in Christian education, and Christian education does not mean mere intellectual knowledge of the truths of Faith. Unless the principles which shine through these truths are deeply rooted in the will by means of the affections, the mere intellectual knowledge simply gives greater responsibility and greater damnation. In the days of childhood the affections and the will are far stronger than the intellect, and it is the worst possible economy to devote all our attentions to move that which is hardest to move and to neglect those which are at the same time the easiest and the most effective in moving. The world is wiser than that. It brings all its powers to bear precisely upon the affections and upon the will, and this is the risk that we have to consider.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own.
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind ;
And, even with something of a mother's mind
And no unworthy aim,

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The homely nurse does all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate, man
Forget the glories he hath known
And that imperial palace whence he came.

If the glorious truths of heaven, radiant from the inaccessible light whence they proceed, are not made to shine into the heart of a child warm with the sunshine of supernaturalized human love, they cannot possibly produce the effects that are congenial to them. If we have had a class of children under our care and we allow them to pass away from us without the practical knowledge that the grace of God can inspire a warmer and deeper affection than the world knows of, we are pushing those children over the brink of a moral precipice. It is quite natural for children to love ; they will always love the nearest thing if it is lovable ; and teachers who fail to win the affection of the children under their charge, need to warm themselves in the rays which proceed from the Sacred Heart and implore that the terrible sentence fall not upon them which is pronounced against those who scandalize the little ones of Christ—for it would be a scandal to stand in the presence of the children, robed in the habit of saints, and yet not radiate an irresistible love into their hearts. The truth of God has become the truth of man ; the love of God has become the love of man ; there is no closer union in the nature of things than that of truth and love, and woe to those who permit a divorce between them. If from those who are appointed to this sweet duty, children fail to receive the love that vivifies, they will of their own accord find elsewhere the love that leads

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to death. St. Paul put down as one of the great sufferings of life his solicitude for all the Churches ; so every teacher should cherish as life's dearest suffering the solicitude for innocent souls.

Our zeal besides being inspired by motives, must be continually regulated and tested. The testing of it, as we have seen, depends on its effectiveness outside of ourselves. I do not say its visible results, for even Our Lord's own personal teaching sometimes seemed to fail. It ought however to become evident to us whether as a general thing we are winning the affection of the children, and whether that affection is drawing them nearer to the love of God. But far more important than the exterior testing is the interior regulation by examining its qualities. Our zeal should be enlightened, prudent, obedient, gentle, patient, industrious, humble, constant and mortified. Here at once is a worthy task for a lifetime. Our meditation of these qualities will be assisted if we think of their opposites. Our zeal must not be blind, nor impetuous, nor self-willed, nor harsh, nor impatient, nor spasmodic, nor overbearing, nor intermittent, nor extravagant. Any one of these faults in ourselves will shut out the rays of light and warmth from the hearts of the children. We study the holy Gospels for many reasons, but one of them must always be to examine the way in which Our Lord, the great Teacher, taught those who to Him were children, and revealed one by one and all together the qualities of the zeal of the Sacred Heart. For what other purpose are we endowed with the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost ? They are treasures

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laid up in our souls ready to be used when occasion requires. Like treasures they are, as it were, locked up within us and we have always in hand the key of prayer to open and bring them forth. However presumptuous it might seem to us to claim Wisdom, Counsel, or Understanding for ourselves, we can have no hesitation in asking these things where others are concerned. Love is bold and importunate, and knows no such hesitation. The children are God's children, and if it is only by wisdom that they can be guided, and God has told us to guide them, the necessary wisdom will surely be at our disposal.

Just as when we want to teach children writing we put a copy before them which is to be imitated, so also in teaching them to be saints. Do what we will, children will always imitate the line just above what they are writing, and put what far-off spiritual models we will before them, it is our own life they will be influenced by. We may talk to them as much as we like about the perfections of the Blessed Virgin, but unless they can see something of the Blessed Virgin in us, all our talking will be in vain. Whether by attraction or by repulsion, their lives will be dominated by ours in proportion as they are under our control. The mother's home influence, being the earliest and the most constant, is the most important of all. I do not know how a mother can hold her child in her arms and not feel within herself something of the spirit of the Madonna. The mother is always the first revelation to the child of the wisdom and mercy of God, as the father is of God's justice and power; and if these attributes

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are not in any way visible in the parents, God help the child. The teacher carries on the home tradition, and in one personality has to reveal all the four attributes—wisdom, mercy, justice and power.

A very necessary detail in this kind of zeal is the previous preparation of the religious instruction we have to give. However familiar the words of the catechism, or the mode of explaining the doctrine, or the facts of the parables and stories, a new preparation is required every time. The question is not : “ What is the truth ? ” but “ How can I make this truth lovable to this child ? ” The answer to this question will vary with every separate child, and no matter how many we have to deal with, every one should be separately considered in relation to all these abstract truths. The study of the catechism alone might degenerate into drudgery and routine, but the study of the catechism in the child and the child in the catechism is full of perennial freshness.

The last thing I shall say is that this zeal of ours, like all effective zeal in the world, must be one which knows how to co-operate, and how to be co-operated with. People who want to do everything themselves, and always put themselves in a critical attitude towards what everybody else is doing, never achieve much in this world. The bringing up of children is a work which is necessarily divided. The home life, the school life, the play life, and the church life are all dominated by different influences, and these four different influences ought to work harmoniously together for the same result of virtue.

A close harmony should subsist between the home

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life and the school life. If there are differences between a parent and a teacher, the children should not hear of these differences any more than if there were one between father and mother. If the father and the mother do differ, they consult over it and come to some decision, and so far as the child is concerned, that decision proceeds from the authority of both. In precisely the same way, if a parent and a teacher differ, they should discuss the matter among themselves, and while the teacher should absolutely uphold the authority of the parent in all that concerns home life, the parent should absolutely uphold the teacher's authority in all that concerns school life. If discipline is good, an occasional error will not do much harm to life ; but if discipline is overthrown, the whole of life goes wrong. Both parents and teachers are fallible, but if they are harmonious in their action, discipline will be good, and the few errors on both sides will be transitory ; but if the children know that their superiors are at variance, the authority of both is imperilled. It would be foolish to spoil the whole scheme of life simply in order to rectify a passing error ; it would be still more foolish if what we want to rectify is not an error.

So far therefore as the children are concerned, we ought to see to it that the home they live in, and the homes they visit, and the school they are taught in, are all in close harmony with the church they worship in. Children themselves are temples of the Holy Spirit, and wherever they are, the place should be a shrine. As the holy House of Loreto, the little

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home in which the Word Incarnate spent so many years, is now encased in marble and dwells beneath the lofty dome of a larger Sanctuary, so the life of a child should be a shrine within a shrine. "My house," said our Lord, "shall be called a house of prayer," and by His house He means the Christian school and the Christian home, as well as the Christian church. It is pitiful to see the waste of possible sanctity in the Church of God because sometimes clergy, sometimes teachers, sometimes parents, are deficient in this zeal, which in truth is no other than the love of God applied to the duties plainly laid upon us. It is well for us to sit down and think who is going to pay the penalty for all the thousands who go astray because the first ten years of their life were not lovingly watched over and tended.

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IX

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"Liquefacta est terra et omnes qui habitant in ea : Ego confirmavi columnas eius."

"The earth is turned to water, and all they that dwell therein ; but I have established the pillars thereof."

—Psalm lxxiv, 4.

It is a joy when reason and revelation conspire to teach the same thing ; and a joy twice over when what revelation shows is the transcendent, the diviner version, and thereby the supreme vindication and explanation, of the hazardous discoveries of our mind.

And reason and revelation alike teach that a Communion is establishing itself in the world.

In all nature, mysterious unions tend ever to form themselves. Things fall into shape, interiorly, and with regard to all things else. There are rhythms even in what we call the Inanimate. Watch carefully a waterfall. You will see it does *not* fall : it comes tossed over its brink—successive masses or sheathes of water, discernible till the brain rocks, almost, to a melody. Trees drive themselves upwards into an intricacy of branch and twig and leaf ; yet within each leaf, each spray, in the whole

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ash or oak, what exquisite equilibrium. Psychology almost wearies us, to-day, with insistence on herd-instincts and the like, though the emphasis is better there than on that internecine strife proclaimed by so many, a generation since, by preference.

And men have never been tolerant of an isolated life, but have passed from group into some wider group.

But just as the wings of pagan philosophy or religion have ever drooped at the very moment when they seemed about to reach their zenith, so there has ever been a check upon these unitive efforts of mankind. The world has never become "the one believed-in thing." How tiny in extent has been even the widest Empire ; how brief in time. Egypt and Babylon sleep, and how long have slept, beneath their sands ; never for a moment did Xerxes or Alexander grasp the whole globe, and they all of them are ghosts.

But among these was a race who ever proclaimed—not surmised, merely, nor hoped, nor pleaded—that the dream should certainly become true ; and announced that were men but obedient to that within each which aspired after communion with its God, a unity never to be accomplished by sword or syllogism would spring into existence that should create within itself all the lesser ones. " My soul hath thirsted for Thee, O my God—yea, and my very flesh, ah ! in how many ways ! In a desert land, where no water was, nor path, there before Thee did I set myself ; and forthwith the wilderness became a holy place, and the desert shall blossom like the

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rose, and all the ends of the earth shall see the Salvation of our God."

My brethren, the dream has been right, but ever our method of realizing it has been wrong. The New Testament, like the Old, insists indeed that we must envisage the world as destined to a Unity ; but Our Lord tells us that we must seek first a kingdom that is God's, and that only so shall all these other things be added unto us.

If you look a little closely even at existing human groups, you will see that it is always in virtue of a common mind that they possess such unity as is theirs. Who in his senses thinks that frontiers make a nation? There are "nations" now in Europe that remind one of nothing so much as of the pagan punishment which put man and dog and snake together in a sack. Of one thing only could you be certain—that humanity would perish. Neither does a common language constitute nationhood ; still less do finance and identity of commercial interests alone. No : the only true unities now in the world are really due to a common mind. There is a Mussulman unity, due to belief in God and His Prophet, though doubtless a special temperament may colour this, or facilitate its permanence, in so far, indeed, as it is not its product. Should once the divine idea evaporate, as they say it is now doing, gone will be the unity of Islam. Despite appearances there is a Hindu unity : examine it, and you will find it rooted in certain metaphysical conceptions, deplorably volatilized, so it seems to me, in the minds of those who return to India from our univer-

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sities, having lost a profound wisdom for the sake of a clever efficiency. The immemorial Chinese unity, based on the most firm and homogeneous social convictions that the world has known, is likewise being broken up by academic persons whose minds have at last imbibed, or shall I say have been debauched by, our worst Western fallacies. The chaotic results in India and in China are but too visible.¹ As for Europe, she has *no* one mind. The days were, when in virtue of her Faith, she went near having one ; but to-day on no one subject can I see Europe as possessed by a conviction ; there is in reality no Europe ; and I often doubt whether in a complete sense there are in her more than the relics of true nations.

When, then, we speculate on international problems and ideals, it is hard to know just what material we are dealing with : and indeed, we might plausibly be told to leave alone the wider endeavour, till the elements that we hope to unify, are sound.

I do not think this would be wise counsel. Often, when we aim high, we accomplish lesser things almost without reflecting upon them. Often, by fixing our eye on the departmental truth or good, its very virtues dazzle us and we are apt to think it is all that matters, or indeed exists. But the clashing of such limited truths and rights forms the very essence of tragedy. All that they possess of true and good is derived from their uncreated and infinite Source ; and so long as we remember that, they are indeed to us its very venerable images ; but the

¹ Preached in 1924.

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moment they seem true and good enough, they become idols. Now the Church, if on the one hand she condemns iconoclasm, condemns, on the other, idolatry no less. It were then wise for Catholics to watch, with obedient humility, what we have been taught of the very Life of God Himself, and of the destiny which has been revealed as that of every soul that wills. For the True Truth, the Really Real, must reflect itself in its appropriate way on every level of existence, if such lesser things are to subsist at all, and to endure.

We know then of God that He is a manifold Unity : that the One is Three. Of the Three, One must be esteemed by us, to be, and indeed is, the Principle of the Second and the Third, that none the less are co-equal and co-eternal with the First. In this Trinity no one of the Three loses identity ; they are not mere aspects of the One ; they are not One, because fused. And as for us, by the unimaginable gift of supernatural grace, we shall be (nay, already may be) so united with our God, that the union achieved by true thought and right choice is but the shadow of a union than which, as it has been said, only the Hypostatic Union of God and man in Christ is closer. Yet ours shall be a real union : we shall not be absorbed ; our identity shall not be lost within the divine embrace. Nay, not in Christ Himself were the Divine and human natures mingled, nor mixed, albeit they made One Person.

Observe, then, that every method of national self-construction, or Government, that belies these great truths, is false.

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There are then two cancers, my brethren, that are gnawing into the body of the world—the first and most easily diagnosed is that false nationalism that causes what seeks to be a nation to act primarily in antagonism to another ; to feel itself real and one, because it is resisting something else. Such nationalism is the parody of nationality, as individualism is of individuality ; socialism of society ; realism of reality ; communism of a community. It may be true that such nationalism arises chiefly, as has been lately said in France, in reaction to oppression : but it remains that when *by preference* a nation remains disunited from the rest, in the long run it is hatching every hatred, every war. It is schismatic. Not thus is imitated the wedlock of Christ with the soul, of Christ with the Church, of man and God in Christ ; the Oneness of the Blessed Trinity. Slay in yourselves the schismatic will. If you do not wish ultimately to be harmonized even with what seems to be enemy, you are on the path of suicide. For that alone survives which is Godlike.

And the second cancer is a false internationalism, or a union which really is not union, but fusion. For I need not dwell on the crude tyranny which, within an association of units, seeks merely to suppress one or more of the elements concerned. Indeed, we see in Europe many an example of those who seek, not truly to unite, nor brutally to suppress, but in subtle ways to fuse. The manifold life is too strong for that. You cannot thus liquefy things : the attempt to fuse will turn into the will to suppress ; and thereupon new schisms, new hatreds, new wars.

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You will not suppose me to be so foolish as to suggest that a theologian, however well versed in the theses of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and of Grace, could solve out of hand the economic, social, or political problems that make our anguish to-day and whose solution is, no doubt, the appalling task that devolves on some of you. But I certainly hold that the more a man has mused on the divine archetype of all human things, the more certainly will his principles of action be right, and the more completely will he be saved from a hundred errors in detail. To begin with he will be preserved from assigning, pessimistically, to the nature of things, what is, in fact, due to the Unholy Ghost of passion and evil will. Passion is good when it intensifies the will to achieve what reason and faith show to be right; else it plunges on the heaving sea of life to make worse chaos of that abyss, unlike the brooding Spirit that gives life and order to it. And in particular he will be on his guard not only against the tyrannies which are obvious to all, but in particular against that plausible fallacy I have called "fusion." The easy way out always has its plausibility; witness that vague religion that with enormous help of dollars, and with organized philanthropy and student zeal, men are preaching everywhere in Europe. So plausible is the parody, so accurate the caricature, as to "deceive, were it possible, the very elect." Ethics, in lieu of holiness, cosmopolitanism for universality, proselytism for apostolic enterprise, fusion for unity. An amalgam, an amorphous mass is the result; a mind de-skeletonized of dogma, a

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will without adequate motive and hence impermanent, are to replace the manifold, articulated unity of our Faith and all-energizing Love, and of the Church, Christ's Body.

Do not despond if you see how imperfect are this world's unities. I said there is a tendency to unification. We can observe, study and assist it. The animals are far from a harmony among themselves, or with us. But we, by training them, can help them to a better self-hood and community. The nations cannot do more than move towards the ideal unity. But they can be helped. We, here, are trying to learn to help. Some of you are studying—and without study all active reform will prove reckless and precipitate—the bases of that justice which shall forbid class to be set against class within a country: those who seek to assist our students by profession, so to say, our University men and women, are trying to recreate an educated Catholic mind homogeneous and inter-operative in every land; the clergy more than ever are having their thoughts turned towards Aquinas, from whose vast sweep none of the problems thus preoccupying us are excluded; the very walls of this city help us and the spirits that haunt them. Reading played once a real national and international part; Parliament has been opened here; kings are buried almost at your feet; the Patriarch of Jerusalem has been here; all this throve until the tragedy that snapped continuity of mind and culture between us and the Continent. May the blood of the Martyrs, the slain, prove once more the true seed of the Church. The

Church herself is eager to help, as she did when within the disintegrating Roman Empire she created a new and better unity, or in the days of Christendom.

Folly to dream that the Church wants, or ever wanted, to suppress or obliterate the nations. Why, not even the religious units that compose her does she seek to fuse. The Uniate churches are not *melted into* her Latin patriarchate. Most sensitive and most strict is Canon Law as to the inviolability of their immemorial rites. In very many ways, historically, has the divinely appointed universal jurisdiction of the Sovereign Pontiff been exercised. The Church, who will rescue the child if the family tyrannizes over it ; who is the almost fierce protector of the family against the encroaching State, is no less anxious to see a true and living *tissue* of humanity in which states, peoples, races, are not fused, and yet, where in a true sense there is no more Jew nor pagan, Greek nor Scythian, male nor female, but all are become One Thing, even as the Son and the Father are unconfusedly One Thing.

Let us thank God, then, that our religion is throughout incarnational, nay, sacramental. Matter is not scorned, and the Spirit is not denied to us. Christ is Alpha and Omega, because, Perfect Word of God, He catches up into Himself all letters, all broken sounds, all stammered syllables ; not because He excludes them. He is First and Last, Beginning and End, that He may be the All *in* all, not because He has absorbed the rest into some lonely self-hood. So true is this Communion, that not only by reason

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of His presence in us, He gives us our one New Name—we are no longer *we*, but a new creation, and His Self is ours—but He—incredible condescension of the most humble God—assumes His own New Name by reason of our incorporation with Himself. Without us, He had not been First-Born of many brethren; without the saved, not Jesus. By means of us, who one by one, and group by ever larger group, pour our lives into His, He reaches His full stature, not yet attained. The eternal hills desired His coming, and His advent thrilled the earth to ecstasy; but even now all nature groans and travails together in expectation of the full revealing of God's sons. "For thee, O dear, dear country, mine eyes their vigils keep." Vision of John, of Augustine, and of Bernard!

But if, in their weak hours, our eyes fail and flinch before the white, yet "many-splendoured Thing," let them turn earthwards and see into what a rainbow it can break itself—in those communions of each day wherein, alas, how often we forget that we are not only one with Him, but with each other. Not far from here, it was once my happy duty to give Communion to hundreds of German prisoners, simple lads, peasants mostly, who sobbed their hearts out at the sound of the Catholic absolution, at the taste of the Bread of the only Life that could be trusted. And again, not far from here, in another camp, I gave that Communion to Pole and Austrian and Belgian, Irish, Englishman and Frenchman, at one self-same altar. Who, at that hour, felt himself a prisoner? Fallen the barriers: walls grown thin

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and unsubstantial. Units, scattered on the vast circumference, drew close to one another, since they had sought the centre. One Bread, One Vine, One Life in all of us. May the God who most wonderfully created human nature, and yet more wonderfully created it anew, grant that in His divinity we all may be partakers, who in our humanity did not disdain to share, and that "in Him, O Lord, we may be found in Whom along with Thee our human nature is."

“THE GREATEST OF THESE”

REV. FRANCIS WOODLOCK, S.J.

X

"THE GREATEST OF THESE"

REV. FRANCIS WOODLOCK, S.J.

*"If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor . . .
and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."*

—I Corinthians xiii, 3.

*"In this we have known the charity of God, because He
hath laid down His life for us : and we ought to lay
down our lives for the brethren."—I John iii, 10.*

*"As long as ye did it to one of the least of My brethren,
you did it to Me."—Matthew xxv, 40.*

IN the *Road to Endor*, one of the most vivid records of war-time suffering, we are given the detailed story of three years' imprisonment among the Turks. Following the title page is the author's dedication of the book to his friend, the doctor who shared and survived the horrors of that captivity. Is there anyone who would not wish to deserve such a tribute for his epitaph? It reads :

"To W. R. O'Farrell, an Irish Gentleman,
Who, himself injured, tended the wounded,
Going on foot, that they might ride,
Without water, that they might drink,
Without rest, that their wounds might be eased,
And afterwards
With a courage that never faltered,
Through nearly three years of bondage,
Cheered us in health,
Nursed us in sickness,

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And ever found his chief happiness
In setting the comfort of a comrade
Before his own."

There are possibly few civilized men to-day who would not acknowledge the beauty of the altruism to which the above dedication is a tribute. Yet it is more than probable that such self-sacrificing devotion would not have been appreciated by those in past ages who only knew a pagan culture.

It is hard for us to realize how little "humanity" there was in fallen mankind before Christ came on earth. Pagan civilization did not seem to involve any gentle consideration for the happiness of others, except perhaps of those who were bound to a man by the ties of kinship or clan. There is little indication that the emotion of pity at another's pain had any place in a pagan's heart, nor was cruelty considered inhuman nor, like cowardice, regarded as something of which men should be ashamed.

The most popular shows in the Roman Coliseum were those in which blood flowed most freely. Vestal virgins would fill the special places kept for them when it was advertised that Christian virgin martyrs, whose flesh was as delicate and tender as their own, were to be torn to pieces by wild beasts for the amusement of the Roman populace. High-born maidens hastened to their reserved seats as eagerly as do modern English girls to-day who have secured tickets for a tennis tournament at Wimbledon.

Nigh twenty centuries of Christianity have had

their effect on the social ideals of civilized peoples, and the Christian code is now so well established that it will probably never be replaced by a return to savagery. Nietzsche made an attempt to revert to a standard of values which would leave no honoured place for pity and which regarded altruistic self-sacrifice as useless folly ; but his " Superman," at least outside the moral chaos of war-time ethics, had no chance of supplanting the " Good Samaritan."

Something of the Divine Love is shadowed forth in that parable. Its ideal is objectively beautiful and true, and once good men have seen the vision, they will ever regard it as something supremely worthy of realization in human conduct.

Even those " after-Christians " who openly reject the Christ of the Creeds cling to His teaching about the brotherhood of man and accept His law of love. In the nineteenth century a certain form of atheism proclaimed altruism as its primary moral precept. Comte thought he had disproved the existence of God in his Positivist system of philosophy, but he attempted to substitute Humanity in place of God and even arranged an elaborate ritual for the ceremonial worships of the new divinity. The Roman Missal, with a few verbal changes in its collects, was used in a blasphemous parody of the Mass, and the *Imitation of Christ* was printed in an expurgated edition in which the word " humanity "—with a capital H—replaced the name of God. All the expressions denoting service, devotion, love and adoration which had been addressed to the Divinity were

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now referred to its abstract and impersonal substitute.

But the image of Christ, the unique Benefactor of mankind, was banished from the Positivist pantheon in which stood the statues of those who were judged to have been of special service to humanity. Christ was alleged to have violated the first commandment of the altruistic faith. He was thought to be "egotistic," in that He demanded that the love of mankind should be centred on Himself. He had said, "Come to *Me* all ye that labour and are heavy laden and *I* will refresh you." He was alleged to have shown an egotism which Positivism condemned when He seemed to make men's chief claim to our love to consist in man's mystical incorporation with Himself. He taught that the brotherhood of man resulted mainly from something beyond man's common nature. It was due to the existence of a Heavenly Father and to the supernatural memberships in a mystical Body given to man through the Incarnation of the Son of God.

Positivism declared against the existence of God ; it denied the possibility of the supernatural and had no place for any Incarnation save that of abstract, impersonal "Humanity" in individual concrete human beings.

Positivism as a religion is dead. It had attempted to find a theological basis for altruism in the alleged divinity of Humanity, but the apotheosis of an abstract idea failed to attract man's religious sense. Abstract humanity, when seen incarnate in average human beings, was too obviously unworthy of adoration to win the worship of men's hearts.

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At the present day there is no attempt to divinize the concept of humanity. But there have been men either agnostic or frankly atheistic, who assert that an altruism which disregards any appeal to religious beliefs as a basis for its philanthropy is superior to the Christian charity which is founded on faith. Because it is free from belief in personal immortality and from any hope of a reward in another world, the new altruism is declared to be beyond any suspicion of self-seeking in its service of mankind.

Some cynical critics of the charity of Christians suggest that their works of benevolence are undertaken less through the love of men than through their love of themselves. Regarding deeds of mercy as the "best paid" form of God's service, they are said to practise them merely in order to amass heavenly riches.

Let me illustrate this form of criticism by a quotation from an American Modernist writer, Professor Kirsopp Lake of Harvard. He shows himself to be blind to the true motive of Christian Charity and misses the secret which explains its all-embracing, truly Catholic scope.

He writes :

"Philanthropy was put on a false basis and the charity of the Middle Ages was less often inspired by the love of man than by the hope of Heaven. In general there was produced a type of selfishness all the more repulsive because it was sanctified." He contrasts this with "the new attitude towards life among the most active and virile of our contemporaries who have almost suddenly ceased thinking about their own immortality and regard their

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work as more important than their own souls. . . . The object of their work is in their minds the improvement of the world in which our children are to live. It is an unselfish object, and the pursuit of a better world for another generation to inherit has become the surrogate for the hope of a better world above for ourselves to enjoy." He declares that "the best men of to-day are not engaged in any strenuous effort to shuffle economic or political cards, but so to understand and educate instincts and to control the circumstances of life that they may permanently improve the conditions of the battle which man upon the earth must fight against disease, ignorance and toil. . . . If they succeed they will produce a world for their children to inhabit which will be better than that in which they have lived themselves. They themselves will never enter the Land of Promise, but it is sufficient for them to have seen it afar off. Their life has come to mean less to them than their work. It may be true that, philosophically speaking, most of them are materialists, and the Christian preacher is often shocked at their plainly stated disregard for all questions concerning a future life. Nevertheless, there is no type of man at present living who so completely sacrifices himself for the good of others or cares so little about saving his own life."¹

I have given Professor Lake's views at length because they are typical of much that is often advanced to prove that "un-religious" philanthropy is ethically superior to Christian charity. The Catholic Church is accused of being too "other-worldly" to be much concerned with man's material well-being on earth; too concentrated on

¹ *Immortality and the Modern Mind*. The Ingersoll Lectures, 1922. (Oxford University Press.)

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the evil of sin, to be much exercised about toil and poverty and disease ; too firmly tied to a traditional code of morality based on the revealed law of God, to be able to approach without bias the study of new remedies for the world's ills based on " science." The Church is said to discourage and oppose much that " scientific " sociology commends, such as birth-control, divorce, socialism and the up-to-date methods proposed by Eugenists for the elimination from the race of the physically, mentally and morally unfit. Its faith seems a barrier to sound philanthropy.

There is just this much of truth in the allegation, that the Catholic Church is unable to view social problems as problems which admit of one and the same solution whether man is considered as immortal or merely as a creature on a level with the animals, in that his entire existence is limited to his life on earth. The Church cannot regard man's immortality as an open question. She knows that an everlasting, spiritual soul is a part, and the overwhelmingly predominant part of human nature. She is sure that every human being will survive death as an individual person. Nor does the Church admit that philanthropic schemes for ameliorating man's lot which are made in ignorance of man's true nature are likely to be of real benefit to mankind. It is all too probable that some plans which aim at bettering his material condition may directly assail the spiritual well-being of man and, while seeming to further his temporal happiness, may be the cause of his eternal misery.

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The Church, then, is unable to support, nay it must oppose with all its strength, certain proposals of so-called philanthropists, just because it knows God's law and knows that man cannot ever be the better for breaking it. For example, Catholic theology recognizes that there is a certain scope for human freedom of action in the relations of married people within the limits of God's commandments, but it quite definitely condemns certain practices which are recommended in the name of "Science" by well-intentioned philanthropists, but which the Church knows to be contrary to God's commandments. That is to say, the Catholic Church absolutely rejects the solutions offered to certain social problems, which are advanced as the only *practical* solutions, by people who take no account of the duty of self-restraint and neglect to consider the help of Divine grace which alone makes that self-restraint possible.

I remember once listening to a conversation between a doctor and a Catholic priest, both of whom were keenly interested in plans for the alleviation of the hardships of the poor by the establishment of a living wage, the removal of slum dwellings and by other reforms to make life more bearable. The doctor's main work lay in a clinic for mothers and their babies, and he told his friend the priest how that day he had treated a delicate mother with a sickly baby in her arms which evidently had but a few weeks of life before it. He had questioned the woman and she admitted that this was her fourth child and that all the others had died in infancy.

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"I told her," said the doctor, "that she had had no right to marry and that it had been wrong of her to bring children into the world who were destined inevitably to a short suffering existence and an early death." The priest was silent for a moment and then he said: "You believe in human immortality, do you not?" "Most certainly I do," replied the doctor, who was a devout Nonconformist. "And you believe in a God of love?" Again he replied: "Most certainly I do." "Well then," concluded the priest, "one day, please God, you and I may meet in Heaven four active, intense human spirits whose whole being is saturated with the happiness with which God floods them and whose heavenly life and joy will last as long as God is God. How can you venture to say that these spirits should have been denied their immortal existence because your Eugenics had decreed that the feeble bodies in which they dwelt for a while, were unfitted to be born into the world?" It was a new aspect to the problem and one which is seldom considered outside the Catholic Church. It certainly raises a query as to the validity of the eugenic principle that no child has a right to be born unless it is physically fitted to survive. It is because "survival" has a wider significance in the mind of a Christian, that the Church is unable to see eye to eye with those whose whole outlook is limited to the life on earth and the material well-being of mankind.

But let us return to Professor Lake's comparison between the materialist without religious belief whose life-work is for the physical betterment of generations

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yet unborn, and the Christian whose charity is inspired by faith in Christ and immortality. Professor Lake says that his philanthropists "regard their work as more important than their own souls." They are "the best men of the day," "the most active and virile." "No type of man now living so completely sacrifices himself for the good of others." They are the fearless leaders in "the fight against disease, ignorance and toil." Unquestionably Dr. Lake places them higher than the Christian saints, though they know not God.

One would not wish to depreciate the value of the work of the "X-ray martyrs" and savants whose research advances our scientific knowledge and has done so much to alleviate human suffering. But before we canonize them we must know the depth of the love of man which stimulated their devotion to their science. Knowing human nature as we do, we must recognize that there may be little to distinguish, psychologically and morally, the devotion of a student searching for a cure for cancer from that of the mediaeval alchemist searching for the philosopher's stone, or of a veterinary doctor, devoted to hunting, who labours to discover a means of stopping the spread of "foot and mouth" disease.

At the best the "love" of a philanthropist working for the benefit of mankind in the next generation, which is impersonal to him, is something very different from the devoted personal service given to living, individual men and women. For love must be individual and personal to be real.

It is here that Christian charity excels other

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forms of philanthropy. Father Damien, who went out to Molokai to bring the encouragement and consolations of religion to his dear lepers, proved his love in a way that won the admiration of the whole world. Yet it is possible that one day a cure of leprosy may be discovered by some scientist who is more interested in the disease than in those who suffer from it. Which of the two would be said to have had the greater love for the leper ?

The essential characteristic of Christian charity, that which gives it its supreme excellence, is that it is *love*. "Love not in word, nor in tongue, but in deed and *in truth*." It is the test of Christian discipleship: "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, that you have love one for another." It is a "new commandment that you love one another *as I have loved you*." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour *as thyself*." "We ought even to lay down our lives for the brethren." How different would be the lot of men, how many social and economic problems would solve themselves if only St. Paul's precept were generally observed: "Bear ye one another's burdens ; so shall ye fulfil the law of Christ."

The acid test of supernatural charity is applied in the matter of the forgiveness of injuries. Here mere philanthropy is helpless to provide a motive which will enable us to forgive *all* who injure us and *as often* as they harm us, "yea, up to seventy times seven."

When there is a question of giving alms to the poor or visiting the sick or feeding the hungry and performing the corporal works of mercy, a sympathetic temperament and a heart that is naturally

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distressed at the sight of suffering may suffice to inspire and carry out a work of philanthropy. We relieve our own feelings in relieving another's want, and subconsciously we may seek our own relief first. But when we have been treated unjustly or suffered injury from another, human nature rebels. Nothing but the law of Christ and the example of Christ and the grace of Christ can strengthen our will to hold in check the fierce animal passion of anger which clamours for revenge. "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," is a command impossible of execution outside the sphere of Christ's influence. Human motives may even lead a man to "distribute all his goods to feed the poor" and his almsgiving may not necessarily prove that he is possessed of true charity. But forgiveness cannot be found in a heart which is empty of that precious virtue.

If I seem to have depreciated "mere philanthropy," it is because it has been compared with and exalted above charity. I am far from denying that it has had beneficial results in the world, but I would wish that no Christian would ever be content with the lesser while the greater is within his reach. Let him transform all his works of beneficence by the motive which his faith makes available and which can convert the baser metal into pure gold. Let the words of Christ, "Ye did it to *Me*," sink into his heart and be the mainspring of his service of his fellow-men.

How wonderful is this Divine device for helping and comforting sufferers and making suffering itself almost sacramental in its effects both on those who

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bear it and on those who relieve it. The explanation of the joy in the hearts of those who give themselves over to a life of service is found in their realization of the mystical union of Christ, the Divine Lover of men, with those who suffer. His Spirit has spoken in their hearts and they are blessed in that they have believed His message, where their bodily eyes have not seen. It is as though He had said: "Risen, glorious, in My Heavenly Kingdom, I suffer and die no more in My own Person. But if you have the eye of Faith, to seek Me, you will surely find Me mystically incarnate in humanity, still burdened with My cross, still hungry, thirsty, sick, poor, yea even in prison. What you do to the least of My suffering brethren whom I love so tenderly, you are doing it to Me. It is through you that I wish to relieve them. Find Me in them, and pay to them the debt of gratitude that you owe to Me."

Christ has attracted the love and gratitude of human hearts by the beauty of His character and the immensity of His love—a love proved by the greatest and most irrefragable proof, His death for each of us upon the Cross. Having focused the rays of man's love and pity upon Himself, He reflects them out again upon all the sufferers of the world, and makes payable to them the debts we owe to Him. He has become immanent in them. Christ still carries His cross through all human existence on earth. We need not envy Simon of Cyrene his blessed task of lifting the Cross from the bruised shoulders of Christ as He climbed the steep road to Calvary, for Christ is still with us and still

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carries His Cross in the persons of all who bear the burden of loneliness or poverty or sorrow or pain. Love is keen sighted to recognize the Beloved under His many disguises. We feed the hungry and visit the sick and shelter the homeless, and our hearts are drawn with sympathy and love of all who need us, for faith assures us that in relieving our neighbour, we are coming to the aid of Christ.

The Sister of Charity in care of a crèche for infants abandoned by their parents shares the joy of Mary, for she recognizes the Babe of Bethlehem, given over to her care, in the person of each of the tiny children in her wards. Little Sisters of the Poor, washing the feet of crabbed old men and women who may show no gratitude for the loving service given them, see only Christ under another of His disguises and feel as Magdalen felt when she bathed her Saviour's feet with her tears. Saints who tenderly kissed the repulsive ulcers of beggars, and at times healed them miraculously by their kiss, saw in these sores the very wounds of their Redeemer. Damien could tenderly love his lepers, those hideous butt-ends of humanity, because the beauty of the hidden God shone through their deformed faces and the love of Christ's Sacred Heart seemed to look out through the sightless sockets and burst eyeballs of the lepers and robbed them of their repulsiveness.

May we share somewhat of the divine charity of such real Christians as these. Our love of Christ should follow Him and find Him wherever He may choose to dwell. If we have the faith which has given us the Gospel—the "good news"—that He is

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still dwelling on earth, really present in the tabernacles of our Churches in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, that same faith gives us also the "good news" that we can meet Him in our homes, in the streets, in hospitals and slum dwellings. Wherever we meet a fellow-man, woman or child looking to us for help in their hour of need, we are meeting Christ Who tells us "What you do to the least of these My brethren, you are doing it to Me."

THE CHARACTER OF MARY AS DEPICTED
IN THE GOSPELS

REV. ROBERT KANE, S.J.

XI

THE CHARACTER OF MARY AS DEPICTED IN THE GOSPELS

REV. ROBERT KANE, S.J.

"Mary of whom was born Jesus Who is called Christ."

—Matthew i, 16.

AND the Angel said to her : " Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High ; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end. . . . The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God " (Luke i, 31-35).

" Burning thoughts and words are as open to criticism as they are beyond it." It is a thought of Cardinal Newman, who, with a keen insight into the human heart, adds : " One would not give much for that love which is never extravagant." When our thoughts are taken up with things that are trivial, or when ordinary emotions ripple over the surface of our lives, our words may be as calm as our countenance and our expressions as measured as the throb of our soul. But should a thought flash forth on our mind with a glory of cloudless sunshine or with a

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horror of tempest fire, should anger convulse our heart with earthquake, or grief freeze our feelings into arctic ice, the words of ordinary life are worthless. If we would speak, so that our speech be true to fact, our expressions must have the vividness, the impetuosity, the daring, the power of metaphor, of enthusiasm, of hatred, or of love. Thus poetry may be more true than prose. But when the very heavens are opened with a Divine outpouring of truth, and when God's own love absorbs and enraptures a human soul, when there stands before the mind no mere vision, however beautiful, of beauty known to mortal eye; no mere charm, however cherished, enshrined within a heart of clay; but a form, fairest, indeed, above all that is fair upon earth, a wisdom more sublime and more serene than ever dawned upon the brain of genius, a character more noble than ever gave honour to a nation or blessing to a home, an excellence so winning, a dignity so admirable, a worth so wonderful, as to prove the most special choice and love and work of God; surely, then, like Jeremias, when the Lord bade him speak, we stammeringly proclaim our powerlessness, or should words burst from our trembling lips, their import must astonish with their strange meaning and their strange enthusiasm the ears of those who are strangers to the revelation of Mary, the Mother of God.

There are different types of character. As in Nature we behold charms of every varied shape and shade, so in the moral world we meet with lives that are unlike in almost every personal feature, and yet

like in this that they are equally beautiful according to their own kind. A rose need not be jealous of the lily, nor a lily of the rose, each has a loveliness of its own which the other cannot have. Both are fair, and who shall say which is fairest. A type may be realized with a blemish, or it may be realized in its befitting perfectness. There may be a blight spot on a rose, a flaw within a character, or a flower may be faultless and a soul without a stain. Still, even taking types as perfect, one may yet belong to a nobler order than another. Each type determines and yet limits its own requisite qualities.

When a picture is to be painted, all colours may not meet upon the canvas in equal vividness or tone, but the one central point of light will range around it, with absolute command, each subservient hue or sheen. So, in music, the melody defines and controls the harmonies. So, too, the dominant ideal, the master-chord of a character will choose the kind and quality of its own elements and it will keep each within such measure as will not mar the strength, symmetry, or beauty of the whole. Thus in the human character of Christ each element, quality, grace, considered singly and in the abstract, might be more excellent than it actually is, or more intense; but as all are met in harmonized reality within His life, they are measured and moderated so that none shall by excess clash against the rhythmical perfection of His ideal type. There are types that are transcendently great in majesty, exquisite in their charm, fascinating in their loveliness, so that when we gaze upon an artistic master-

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piece or when we listen to the music of a great composer, we understand that even things that are human may lift us up to things that are divine. Behold a masterpiece of God, the picture which He has painted, the melody which He has called forth, the character which He has chiselled in the person of His own Virgin Mother.

The silence of the Gospels about Mary may at first sight seem strange, but a little reflection will convince us such silence is only apparent, and that even when they do not tell us much in words, they reveal her to us in more vivid ways. Nor, indeed, should we expect the story of her life or the description of her character to have been set in definite detail before the world's gaze. She is the Queen-Mother who rarely appears in public except in the presence of the King. Her influence is not of the camp nor of the council hall, but of the home. When the great officials have retired, and the pageantry of the court has been laid aside, the ceremonial of royalty is abandoned for the confidence of intimate friendship, and the crown is forgotten in the interchange of sympathy between heart and heart.

The Gospels do, however, as far as reverence for her high office will allow, speak much of Mary. God's own words are few because so full of meaning. God's own Name, "I am Who am," reveals His nature and His attributes. The Name Jesus reveals the plan and character of the New Testament. Thus, "Mary of whom is born Jesus," explains not only who, but what she is.

Look upon this picture. Behold a maiden

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absorbed in prayer. Suddenly, before her stands a Presence, that is not of earth, and from out a splendour as of supernatural sunshine is echoed to her ear a salutation of strange praise and awful meaning : “ Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou amongst women.” Of old the apparition of an angel had often dazzled or dismayed patriarch or prophet. Soon the apparition of an angel will paralyse the shepherds at Bethlehem with “ exceeding great fear.” But this maiden’s trouble is not of terror. It is the trouble of a deep humility hurt by strange praise, so that she wonders what such a salutation can mean. Silent, self-controlled, humble, prudent, brave, she waits.

Again the angel speaks. To calm her trouble, he calls her by her name : “ Fear not, Mary.” She must know indeed that his message is for her ; yet, he proclaims the reason of his praise to be that she is blessed of God. Then the angel announces the mystery of the Incarnation. God’s ambassador does not yet receive his answer. Mary, not dazzled by a glory, nor overwhelmed by a dignity so divine, but prudent still, and, even before the promise of the Motherhood of God, unmoved in her absolute allegiance to her consecrated innocence, lays down her condition : “ How shall this be done ? ” Her virgin-hood must be ever inviolate. And of this she must have from the angel an authentic proclamation for her Child’s honour and her own. Whereat Gabriel proclaims the safeguarding by the power of the Holy Ghost, of Mary’s inviolate innocence. Then, bowed down in recognition of her utter

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nothingness before God the maiden answers Gabriel : " Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word." Mary is the Mother of the Eternal Word. So humble, so reserved, so maidenlike, yet so prudent, so serene in absolute control, so staunch in absolute innocence.

Now gaze upon another picture. Prompt in eager helpfulness, fearless and fast in bearing blessing, her young swift feet passed in haste amongst the hills. O, vision of beauty and of power ! O, blessed sward that touched her feet ! O, blessed breeze that fanned her cheek and waved her hair above her brow ! O, blessed birds, that won her ear ! O, blessed flowers, that met her glance ! O, blessed sunshine that grew brighter for the radiance of her smile ! O blessed earth and sky, that looked upon the face of this maiden, blessed amongst women, the Blessed Mother of the Messiah, whom she bore ! O, blessed home into which she entered ! for lo ! at the sound of her voice, the unborn Baptist was sanctified, and leaped for very joy ; while in answer to her salutation, Elizabeth, breathed upon by the Holy Ghost, proclaimed her blessed amongst women.

Mary is no cold recluse, no soulless ascetic. Holiest above the holy, she is most warm-hearted of all who are human, more prudent than any sage, more pure than any angel, more wise than any doctor, more modest than any maiden, she has the inspiration of a prophet, the courage of a martyr, the energy of an archangel, the enthusiasm of a seraph ; with the simplicity of a child, she has yet the impetuous fervour and torrent-like tenderness

of a noble-hearted woman. Listen to her song. Clear and sweet and strong the silver notes of the Magnificat burst forth from the seraphic lips in undulous accent of music. Up in ecstatic charm, round in ringing rhapsody the tones throb on the resonant air till its enraptured chords answer in rippling waves of melody that rise and fall in obedient beauty to the voice of the Mother of God.

Surely, surely, each animate ear that heard it was ravished to delight like an echo of Paradise. Surely, surely, the celestial choirs paused in their Hosannas to listen to this new creation of loveliness. For, never song of bird or angel, never sound of earth or heaven, could rival the rapture of the revelation of mystery and music breathed forth in Mary's Magnificat. With full-throated power and pathos her soul pours forth her impassioned praise of the Lord, till the eddying ecstasies of the melody beat with exultant joy, responsive to the joy of her spirit in God her Saviour. Softer and deeper and fuller flow the flute-like tones of her hymn as it trembles with awe for her own lowliness, yet thrills with gratitude for the goodness of God. Then, wrapt in the vision of distant days, her prophetic canticle proclaims that she, the humble maiden of Nazareth, unknown to the Gentile and unhonoured by the Jew, shall be blessed wherever are preached the good tidings of God ; aye, blest while the tides of time flood in joy, or ebb in tears, before they bless her for ever beyond the everlasting shore.

The prayer, the praise, the prophecy with its glad gratitude, with its sweet humility, with its exultant

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triumph resounded yet one moment more. Then the song ceased. Yet, no ! Her song is still within her soul. Still from her heart it strikes with magnetic spell of sympathy upon the hearts of those who love her child. Nor ever shall it fail to call forth, with sweet soothing strain, an answer of adoring love for God from the children of Eve, who mourning and weeping in this vale of tears, still turn in prayer to the Mother of Christ, that she may show unto us, after our exile, the Divine Fruit of her innocence.

Contemplate her portrait under a different light as it is painted in the Gospel by the "disciple whom Jesus loved." Merrily round about the board the guests at the marriage feast are chatting, laughing, singing. One slight tall figure of a matron presiding as kinswoman of the bride is like the central point of light in that bright glad picture. But when the ring of the happy voices is loudest, and the peal of merry laughter clearest, her quick, watchful eye has noticed that the wine has run short. Not even the chief butler knows of it, when the lady glides like a sunbeam to where the Christ is reclining, and bending over, with her hand on His shoulder, whispers into His ear, "They have no wine." "Lady," He reverently murmurs, "what is it to Me and to thee?" Mark the true meaning of these words. It is a well-known idiom of the Syro-Chaldaic, the language used by our Lord, and of other kindred tongues. Its meaning in English is, "What difference can there be between Me and thee," or, better still, "We cannot but be of one thought and wish." Then the Christ adds, "My hour is not come."

Louder rang the voices, more merrily the laughter pealed, while, unnoticed, the swift presence of the lady passed from place to place.

It is the manifesto of the King. It is the official proclamation of His policy, and the authentic manifestation of the spirit of His reign. Out of the huge jars flows the richest and ruddiest heart-blood of the grape. Out it flows in fullest tide. Out it flows in choicest flavour. Look at Mary, at whose command her Son changed water into wine. Look and learn what no words can ever tell, the delicate human feeling and the endearing human sympathy of the heart of Mary. It is the true character of the Virgin Mother of Christ.

One more portrait from the Gospels. The picture is very dark, but in the foreground, with haunting vividness and spectral horror, there gleams a tall white figure nailed upon a cross, and beneath the cross a woman stands: "There stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother." Oh! woe! woe! woe that is wide and deep and bitter as the ocean! The sight of the Cross, the nails, the crown; the sight of the Face, the sight of the torn and mangled Body chills her blood till her face is as white as the face of the dying Christ. Each sigh or groan of His agony rends her heart with a paroxysm of pain. The trembling of His shame for sin, the terror of His abandonment by God, rocks her soul with horror and anguish. Tearful, dolorous, most broken-hearted of all mothers who ever wept, still bravest of all who held their courage in the face of death and despair, she stands through the long, long hours, through the

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keen, keen sorrow, beneath the Cross, where is dying the adorable God of her life, the darling Babe of her bosom. O most sweet, sad Mother ! O most valiant Mother ! Thou art human as any mother of earth, more heroic than any martyr in heaven ! O dear, brave Virgin Mother of Christ.

Brethren, all our religion, all our faith and all our hope rest absolutely upon Christ. Christ is God, and Christ is Man. His Godhead is to us, mortals, invisible, incomprehensible, and that is why He is also Man, in order that we should truly know Him, and that He thus might win our love. Is your Christ to you merely a myth, or is He a Man ? Is he only the memory of a great name in history, or is He someone Who is beside you in all your daily ways, and thinks within your thought, and shares the most sacred secret of your heart ? Is your own Christ to you a real Christ ? If this be not so, then, alas ! your religion, your Christianity is as false and as empty as fiction. If your Christ is real to you, He is your Friend, your dearest Brother. Should you still feel that there is some shadow between you and your Brother Christ, come to His Mother. You know her well—the truest, tenderest, most loving and most lovable woman earth ever knew : a Mother, the Virgin Mother of Christ, and your Mother too. Come to her, whom you cannot fear, whom you must love, and say to her : “ Mother, show unto us the Blessed Fruit of thy womb, Jesus.”

THE REAL PRESENCE
REV. EUSTACE BOYLAN, S.J.

XII

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"I shall go over into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even to the House of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with the noise of one feasting."—Psalm xli.

THE Blessed Sacrament is the centre of our spiritual life. It is the hearthstone round which the Catholic family gathers. With this left out the whole tone of our devotional life would be different. Yet the Real Presence is a tremendous mystery, a great test of faith, and Christ Himself made it a test case—in fact, the Great Test.

It was after the great miracle of the loaves and fishes that He first propounded the doctrine, yet many of those who had witnessed the miracle, or, at all events, had authentic information about it, said : " This is a hard saying, and who can hear it ? " " And after that many of His disciples walked with Him no more." Then Our Lord turned to the Twelve and said : " Will you also go away ? " Peter stepped to the side of Christ and used those memorable words which belong to the universal language of faith : " Lord, to Whom shall we go but to Thee ? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that Thou art Christ, the Son of God."

So clear is the doctrine of the Real Presence in

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Holy Scripture, and in the teaching of the Church from the beginning, that I am convinced no difficulty on these heads would be found by any candid enquirer were it not for the intrinsic difficulties of the mystery. So tremendous, indeed, is the mystery, so unexpected antecedently to its institution, apparently so extravagantly prodigal as a gift of God, that the mind may well pause before the mystery, as before the greatest test of faith. But once it is accepted, it is found to fit in with and round off, as nothing else can, the whole amazing liberality of God's dealing with man.

The Blessed Sacrament is a mystery both for the mind and for the heart. As *a mystery for the mind*, it is like all the other great truths which concern the Divine Nature. It is beyond our comprehension as infinity is beyond the finite. If we ask ourselves how the substance of the bread and wine can be changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, we may reply with St. Augustine: "By that same power which said, Let there be light, and light was made."

In the natural order we have, under our eyes, mysteries which, if they do not furnish a complete analogy of the supernatural mysteries, at least prepare the mind for them. In the grain of wheat, for example, we may contemplate a miracle and a mystery which all may see but none may understand. Take in your hand that tiny seed. It is apparently lifeless. There is little in it to attract the outer senses; no striking beauty of form, as in the palm or in the fern; no miracle of colour, as in the rose or the pansy; no alluring subtlety of texture, as in

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the petals of the geranium. It presents little more to the outer eye than does a chip of wood or a fragment of dust. But the inner vision, penetrating the commonplace walls of the tiny seed, enters into a palace of wonders. It sees things which surpass the dreams of fairyland. It finds itself looking down one of the tremendous, interminable corridors in the "sounding labour house vast of being." The whole atmosphere of the place palpitates with miracle and mystery—the miracle and the mystery of the life which animates the seed. The mind can discern in the potency of that seed countless millions of square miles of waving fields of grain, growing and ripening from generation to generation, and capable of covering not only the entire cultivable earth, but also of covering tens of thousands of planets as vast as the earth itself. And all these marvels in the one little grain! If that single grain of wheat were the only specimen of plant life in the world, it would still be sufficient to assure the harvests of countless generations. And the life of all the stalks in those boundless harvests lies hidden in this single grain of wheat, from which, through successive reproduction, they derive their being. And so, though the analogy is imperfect, the same infinite power that multiplies the seed multiplies also the Sacred Presence wherever the words of Consecration are pronounced over the bread and wine.

The multiplication of the wheat is a miracle of the natural order; Transubstantiation is a miracle of the supernatural order. We are familiar with the one from experience; we know the other through

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the Word of God. But the mind, though it recognizes both as facts, can understand neither the one nor the other.

By stilling the storm with a word, Christ showed Himself the Master of the inanimate world ; by raising Lazarus and others from the dead He proved Himself the Lord of life and death ; and by the miracle of the loaves and fishes He prepared the minds of His followers for the mystery of Transubstantiation.

Thousands had followed Him into the wilderness. They had remained with Him three days, and the time had now come to dismiss them. But, their provisions being already exhausted, they were hungry. Christ, therefore, adopted a course which fulfilled a twofold purpose. It appeased their hunger, and at the same time prepared them for the doctrine of the Real Presence.

And Jesus called together His disciples, and said : I have compassion on the multitudes, because they continue with Me now three days, and have not what to eat. And I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. And the disciples say unto Him : Whence then should we have so many loaves in the desert to feed so great a multitude ? And Jesus said to them : How many loaves have you ? And they said : Seven, and a few little fishes. And He commanded the multitude to sit down upon the ground. And taking the seven loaves and the fishes, and giving thanks, He brake and gave to His disciples and the disciples gave to the people. And they all did eat, and had their fill. And they took up seven

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baskets full of what remained of the fragments. And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children (Matt. xvi).

The divine power, through a handful of wheat, multiplied through successive harvests, feeds whole nations with bread ; the same power, through seven loaves, multiplied in a different but not more wonderful way, fed thousands of hungry men, women and children. And, again, the same power—" to which no word shall be impossible "—acting in a still more marvellous way, feeds the souls of hungry millions with the Bread of Life, multiplied as much as may be required in the constantly repeated miracle of Transubstantiation.

The Blessed Eucharist is also *a mystery for the heart*. Our heart pines for kindness, for remembrance, for love. Even the fidelity of a faithful dog we repay with gratitude. The love of parent, brother, sister, child and friend is the very native air of the heart. We need it. We can hardly live without it. But when all other love fails us, we still have God. Him, too, we need ; and we need Him most of all. Those who have lost God are restless and unhappy. And their unhappiness is like the inarticulate cry of the infant for its mother, " Where is the One Whom my soul seeketh ? " In a hundred ways we pine for Him. We need His love and His sustaining arms.

But when we turn to the Holy Eucharist for consolation, our narrow, human hearts are confronted with a profound mystery—truly a mystery for the heart. Can such love be ? Can the great God of the universe pour out His affections upon us with such

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extravagant prodigality? Can it be that such a One woos our wretched hearts with such tender artifices? Well may we hesitate for a moment in perplexity, for we are only men, with our narrow thoughts of human love and human goodness. But the mystery clears when we reflect that we are dealing with the Heart of God.

We turn to the life of Christ, and the light on this amazing mystery of love grows brighter and brighter. We see the poor stable on the hillside, with the little Babe in the manger, and we think deep thoughts; we note the humble home of Nazareth, where dwell Mary and Joseph and Mary's marvellous Son; we see the poverty, the privation, the obscurity; and as we reflect on the meaning of it all, knowledge grows. A love which will do all this will do anything. Yes, there is no limit to this love. He is wooing our hearts, as only a divine lover could, with the most delicate artifices. He speaks to us, God though He be, not in the language of power and majesty, but in the language we know best—the language of want and heart-hunger. Yes, He wants us.

We follow His steps to the terrible tragedy of the scourging, and the crowning of thorns, and the last awful scene on the Hill. There love utters its last strong cry.

And is that companionship now to cease? Is it to be for us of later times only a reminiscence shining sweetly, but somewhat dimly, through the long vista of the receding centuries? No, most happily, no. Infinite resourcefulness and infinite love discover the way. The gift of the Sacred Humanity was too great,

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too overwhelming, to be lavished on one generation. It is to be perpetuated. And so, before the consummation of His sacrifice, He has left us a twofold legacy—His Mother and Himself. He could have given us no greater gifts than these. In the midst of His agony, He gave us His Mother ; a few hours before, in the supper-room, He instituted the Blessed Sacrament, and gave us Himself as a perpetual gift.

Yes, indeed, the Blessed Eucharist is a mystery for the heart ; but it is in line with the whole amazing story of this Lover's quest for our souls, from the stable of Bethlehem even to the Hill of sorrow.

The Real Presence, then, is a wide and profound joy to the believer. It invests our churches and oratories with a beautiful and fascinating character, making them havens of peace and consolation, and elevating the spiritual sense of the worshipper. The Blessed Sacrament is the very centre of our devotional life. It is the hearthstone round which the Catholic family gathers. With this left out, the whole tone of our devotional life would be radically different. The Sacred Humanity would still be an adorable reminiscence ; the life of Christ might still be our consolation and our hope ; but in the dark hours of existence how far off God would seem ! If through some catastrophe all those little ruby lamps of the sanctuary were extinguished for ever, and the tabernacles left empty, what a darkness would fall on the world ! What a happiness and ease of heart would vanish into gloom ! Every true Catholic understands this.

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If we go into a non-Catholic church to examine, let us say, the beauty of the architecture, or just to take a look round, what do we notice? The place is cold. It seems empty. Our footfalls echo hollow and desolate in the empty spaces. To us the place, despite perhaps its irreproachable architecture, is four dead walls, and nothing more. There is something wanting. The saints are not encouraged—or, if they are, they do not feel at home there; we feel the angels are absent; the sweet Virgin Mary is not welcomed—perhaps not even wanted; there is no sanctuary lamp; no fire on the hearth; the atmosphere is chilly; the place is not homely. It is like a home where there is no mother, from which the father is absent, and the children, too, are all away. We miss many things; but, above all, we miss that which gives its meaning to all else—the *inhabited tabernacle*, the loving companionship of the Sacred Humanity, the soft music of a whisper we fain would catch: “O ye who labour and are heavily laden, behold I am here!”

How great is the contrast when we visit one of our own churches, no matter how humble it may be! It is a different world; a haven of peace and hope and companionship. Here we have something more than an empty house, something more than four dead walls. The place lives. It is beautiful—always beautiful. It has a soul. It is tenanted. And the soul of this living, beautiful temple is the everlasting Lover of our souls—the Sacred One Who brightens our pilgrimage with His unfailing love and His heart-easing companionship.

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And what is the secret of this intense spiritual life so widely spread among the faithful, of this frequent elevation of the humblest and most poverty-stricken Catholic men or women to a sublime realization of the most beautiful things in existence? The secret is Bethlehem, Nazareth, Calvary. But not Bethlehem, Nazareth, Calvary apprehended as sweet and gracious visions appearing somewhat dimly through the growing haze of two thousand years, or as pertaining to regions separated by thousands of miles of land and water. No, Bethlehem is over the road in the little wayside chapel; Calvary is over there where the Mass bell tinkles at the tremendous words of the Consecration; Nazareth is there where the little ruby lamp of the sanctuary burns day and night before our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, really present in the tabernacle and consoling our pilgrimage with His 'amazing companionship.

A distinguished writer says that to the humble man the rose is redder than to the ordinary man. I say with all humility, but with complete confidence, that to the devout believer in the Real Presence the rose is redder than to other men, the sky is of a deeper blue, the meaning of life is more profound, the light on the path more intense, and the joy that is in the heart of things more easily apprehended.

For God is not only in His heaven, not only present everywhere in the inscrutable immensity of His divine nature, but He is present in our midst in a way that grips our heart-strings, looking into our

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souls with His human eyes, assuaging our bruises with His human hands, loving us with His human heart, and whispering to us from the tabernacle where the little lamp glows before the Sacred Presence, "Come to Me and I will give you rest."

PANEGYRIC ON
SAINT MADELEINE SOPHIE BARAT
REV. W. S. LOCKINGTON, S.J.

XIII

PANEGYRIC ON SAINT MADELEINE SOPHIE BARAT

REV. W. S. LOCKINGTON, S.J.

"As everlasting foundations upon the solid rock so are the commandments of God in the heart of a holy woman."—Ecclus. xxvi, 24.

I LOOK back across the ages—nearly two thousand years. I see an unknown country maiden working quietly in a little house in an obscure village. She is utterly unknown by the world, poor, humble, holy, selfless. Thus she lived and thus she died.

I come down the path of the centuries, until three hundred years ago, and again I see an unknown country maiden working quietly in a little house near an obscure village. I see her seated in a farmer's cart coming down the hillside into the village and passing through the narrow street to the door of a convent. She enters, utterly unnoticed and unknown. There she lived and there she died.

Ages pass and in our own times—but a century ago—I see again an unknown country maiden quietly moving about her work in her father's house in an obscure village. I see her at the call of God leaving her father's house. Clad in rustic dress, shy and retiring, she enters a great city.

Preached on the occasion of the Canonization of the Saint, in the Convent Church of the Religious of the Sacred Heart at Rose Bay, Sydney, Australia.

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THREE CALLS

To the first country maiden came a radiant Ambassador from the regal courts of Heaven. "Hail, full of grace," he cried.

The lowly country maiden is Mary the Mother of God, the Mother of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

To the second country maiden came that Son of Mary, the Son of God, and spoke to her: "Behold the Heart that has so loved men and is so little loved in return."

The lowly country maiden is St. Margaret Mary, chosen to show to mankind the flame of love burning for all men in the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to lead them to love Him in return.

To the third maiden came the same call from God. He clothed her in the mantle of St. Margaret Mary, for she like her was to be His Apostle of the Sacred Heart and carry the Lamp lit by St. Margaret Mary to the very ends of the earth.

Clad in the mantle of St. Margaret Mary she was to send the clarion call of love sounding strong across the earth, thrilling heart after heart until she had gathered a regiment of fearless, enthusiastic, trained fighters, ready to follow the swift feet of Jesus to death if need be—their glowing love restrained only by the leash of Obedience.

To-day, from East to West and from Pole to Pole the world rings with the praises of that lowly country maiden, for to-day the highest of all honours is hers and Christ's Vicar has raised to the altars of God one who stands at the head of that splendid regiment, the religious of the congregation of the

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Sacred Heart of Jesus—Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat.

It is my purpose now, before this Tabernacle at the ends of the earth that owes its existence to her, to study for a few moments the marvel of her life.

She was a child of storm. Her young eyes beheld France broken on the wheel of Revolution: France polluted by the awful scenes of the Reign of Terror, when Reason seemed to have fled from men. Her own brother was seized and condemned to death and her family harassed. She lived through times when shattered society was groping toward Liberty in anarchy and rioting and bloodshed.

SPARTAN TRAINING

When first we see her she is a high-spirited, impetuous, strong-willed girl. Christ began her training early. This fiery, independent soul, flashingly rapid in thought and word and act was to be trained in toils and tears and tribulation. She was to be formed in the mould of seemingly irrational repression, and every desire—even the most natural and innocent—checked and thwarted all through her youth.

In her early girlhood, God made her break from her nearest and dearest and leave the atmosphere of love that surrounded her in her home. Her brother—a holy man, but hard and narrow and inexperienced in the direction of souls—brought her to Paris, where he made her live a life, the austerities and repressions of which recall to us the lives of the hermits of the primitive Church.

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On her side, child though she was, there was no shrinking, no word of complaint, though the training in ancient Sparta was scarce so harsh as hers.

She was trained in constant humiliation and austerity, but her magnificent soul grew to rare strength under the trials. Just as the sturdy tree, buffeted and shaken by the tempest, but strikes its roots the firmer and deeper into the Earth that supports it—so, our Saint tried by increasing humiliations, but sank deeper into the Fount of Strength and Abyss of Love—the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As a result, every movement of self was so controlled that all her characteristics were hidden—there were no external signs revealing them. The energy was there, the swift impetuous spirit was there—but all was hidden in the silent strength of the Sacred Heart—a strength that lifted her above creatures and trained her to perfect selflessness.

What though her body broke under the trial!

Her indomitable soul continued to climb Calvary unflinchingly.

She trod this path until her twenty-first year. Then God sent her to Father Varin.

THE FOUNDATION STONE

See her as she stands before him, the director who in God's Providence was to guide her and help her to lay the foundations of the mighty edifice she was to erect in God's Honour.

Father Varin wished to build up again the shattered cloisters of France and to safeguard the

children of France by founding an Order of nuns to teach them. He was assiduously seeking for one who would be, as he said, the foundation stone of the new society.

He heard of the young sister of Father Barat and was told that "she was talented, highly educated, and had a vocation to the religious life." "I saw her," he said, "a very delicate-looking, very retiring, very shy girl, and I said to myself, 'What a foundation stone!'"

No wonder that Father Varin could not at first see the treasure—the pearl of great price—hidden in the field of that worn and weakened body! But he was a skilled director of souls and soon realized with an ever growing delight the wonderful degree of virtue concealed beneath her cloak of humility. Under his wise guidance her soul blossomed to fullness in the golden rays of Confidence and Love. Love so swayed her that she wished to make a paradise on earth for herself and her beloved Master, and thought to seek sanctuary in the hallowed quiet of Carmel cloisters.

CALL OF CARMEL

So, too, can we in imagination see her Beloved seated on the hilltop above Nazareth, looking across the long plain to Carmel towering in glorious silence above the shining sea and longing to live His life there in retirement. But no—there, beneath His eyes is the long road with its weary leagues running southward, that He must tread to its end; the road that He must pace slowly, facing pain and trial to

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where in the blue haze on the horizon it ends on Calvary.

So, too, our Saint. Like her loved Master, she was to tread the slow path of the years, walking where God willed and spending herself for others. But there was always a breath of Carmel about her. Her heart was always a Carmel cloister where she ever held close union with her Master—a fragrant sanctuary unperturbed by the storms and currents of the sea of life.

HER IDEAL TAKES FORM

The years gave definite shape, slowly and through much tribulation to God's purpose in her—the forming of souls after the pattern of the Sacred Heart. She realized that she was to form an Order named after the Sacred Heart, modelled after the Sacred Heart, and moved by the dominant force of the Sacred Heart, the strongest force of all—Love, with its handmaidens, Humility, Confidence and Charity.

She was a glowing centre of love and enthusiasm, and such a heart was a magnet for kindred souls, and they came flocking to her. As they came she held each to her own burning heart till each blazed with generous selfless love, and then sent each forth to set the flame of love burning in the hearts of others. This was the aim and purpose of her life. “I hope that God will fill our convents with those who will refuse Him nothing: such are very rare now and we must pray a great deal to get them,” said our saint.

“Pray a great deal” they did, and subjects came

flocking to the Flag. Splendidly generous souls they were, worthy of their leader. With them nothing was reserved for self—all was offered to God in a spirit of rare charity, that over-leaped all natural and national barriers and brought about the consummation that Christ had prayed for, "Father, I pray that they may be one as Thou and I are one." In the school of Love where our Saint moulded these great souls all experienced the truth that "Love runs, flies, rejoices." In it every heart gave testimony to the truth of those words of Holy Writ: "When thou hast dilated my heart, I have run in the way of Thy Commandments."

"What seems to me miraculous," said one of them, an Irishwoman, "is that, no matter where they come from the novices are all alike and seem all to have the same customs and the same ideas. In short, they have one heart and one soul. I attribute this unanimity to their love of their Superior General who is one of the humblest and least awe-inspiring of all the community."

Among the first subjects of the infant Society were valiant women of proven strength and rare force of character; women who had continually braved danger and death, succouring imprisoned priests during the Reign of Terror; women who had stood steady-footed amid the seething passions that boiled over in terrible excess. Their love of the Master had been tried in the fire and proved pure gold; their strength was the typical quietness of supreme valour.

Through the years our Saint patiently moulded these souls to conformity with her Ideal. The

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Rules that with prayer she wove for their guidance, were the crystallization of the Ideal God had inspired her to follow. She wrote them—her heart beating in unison with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

OPPOSITION

But the path of the saints is ever the same as the path of the Master. Calvary must be climbed before Olivet can be gained. And Saint Madeleine Sophie is no exception.

Because of these Rules, that made her Ideal plain to others she was made to suffer most intensely, and her fidelity and strength were most cruelly tested. Well-meaning men attacked them ; the Rules must be changed, the very name of the Society was objected to. Even some of her own daughters were troubled and doubting. Priests and others in the excess of their zeal, objected to the Saint herself and strove to thrust her aside, deeming her unfit to govern. They looked not beneath the quiet exterior and forgot that "Gentleness and patience are greater than force and anger." Christlike she stood unmoved through it all, faithful to her Ideal, a striking example of the seldom realized truth that Meekness is the highest form of valour. "Jesus was silent," she said, and she in her mighty strength imitated Him when humanly speaking imitation seemed impossible.

Her little Society was brought to the very verge of destruction. In the struggle, again and again through the long years she stood alone and fought single-handed against seemingly overwhelming odds

for her beloved Rules. Alone yet not alone, for she trusted Him fully for Whom she was fighting. She turned to no creature for consolation. And it is inexpressibly touching to see that strong soul kneeling through long hours weeping as she talked with Jesus, first in the little tribune at Amiens, and later when her completed work was threatened, in the dark recess between sacristy and altar at Paris.

In the face of seemingly insuperable difficulties she pressed on, heeding only the Beckoning Hand of Christ, and in the silent strength of the Sacred Heart she conquered.

CHRIST'S VICAR APPROVES

The Pope, the Vicar of Christ, approved of her Society, of its name, of its aims, and of the Rules that gave form to those aims, and enrolled it as one of the Orders of the Church.

In the Constitutions of the Society—the external expression of her Ideal—the genius of our Saint is revealed in every line. One eminent authority—Cardinal Recanati—said of them :

“ It has been my duty to read the constitutions of almost all religious Orders, whether ancient or modern. All are admirable and bear the stamp of God ; but those of the religious of the Sacred Heart seem to me to be full of beauty. They excel all because they contain the essence of religious perfection and are at the same time a masterpiece of unity. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is at once the pivot on which all turns and the goal to which all tends.”

Can greater praise be conceived ?

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By these Rules through the years she moulded her daughters. And in a manner that is almost unique she marked them indelibly with her own spirit ; a spirit uniting the quiet shyness of the cloistered nun and the valiant fearlessness of the active order ; a spirit of boundless humility, ardent zeal for souls, fearless self-sacrifice and constant union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

THE HARVEST

In such a school of love the Society grew apace. Again and again it met with opposition from without, from those who hated Christ, and therefore strove to annihilate it. Our Saint met it and conquered it just as she had met and conquered the opposition from within of former days. Convents were seized, nuns were banished as powerful nations rose against them. But that was to be expected, for "the servant is not greater than his Master," and our Saint unperturbed, sent her valiant women abroad to labour in other lands, for as she said, "the whole world is our home."

Oh, the marvel, the divine marvel of it all !

We wonder at but can understand the spirit animating, for example, St. Ignatius. By nature and training a soldier, we see him armour-clad, sweeping down the river valleys of his loved Spain, at the head of the galloping squadron. Following the call of God, he is still a soldier, battling for Christ, his new Leader, and fighting warrior-like at the head of the regiment he has organized for Christ.

But when one sees a shy woman with the spirit of

Carmel, yet gathering and leading a regiment of fearless, enthusiastic, trained fighters for Christ, and beholds them sweeping irresistibly around the globe one's wonder at the marvel is greater, for, humanly speaking, it is inexplicable.

LIKE ST. TERESA

No wonder that men sometimes erred in their esteem of her.

"She seems in marked contrast to such saints as St. Teresa," says one writer. That writer knows her not. The heart that blazed with love for the Crucified, in the breast of our Saint and the heart of St. Teresa are wonderfully alike. St. Madeleine had the fiery spirit of St. Teresa, tempered by the winning gentleness of St. Francis de Sales, steadied by the sagacity of St. Ignatius, and curbed by the selfless humility of St. Francis of Assisi.

"There seems something too timid in her disposition and too passive in her character," said the same writer.

Too timid ! Perish the thought ! Circle the earth and measure her work. Timid ! What seemed timidity was the powerful force that refrained from action until the human instruments she guided were sufficiently attuned to harmonize with the wishes of the Master she so valiantly followed. For this she waited in regal strength. Too passive ! Not to Him Who looks into the furnace of her heart steadily glowing beneath the veil of a humility so selfless as to simulate annihilation.

Thus may the onlooker speak of the passivity of

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the mighty glacier ignorant of the irresistible nature of its imperceptible advance.

Passive ! She who sturdily staggered onward while the Lord loaded her down with crosses, seemingly beyond human endurance !

Passive ! She who stood firm before unending storms of ignorance and hatred ! As well call passive him who breasts the raging flood to succour the suffering because he stands at times to make sure his foothold ; he moves not, yet every fibre of his being is straining against the torrent that threatens destruction.

Passive ! She was passive in imitation of the passivity of Christ climbing Calvary—most wondrous restraint veiling superhuman strength.

Who dare measure such a spirit ?

Hers was the noiselessness of the speeding planet ; the smoothness of incredible velocity ; the restraint of gigantic force moving irresistibly towards its goal ; her source of strength that which gave courage to the martyr at the stake—the Strength of the Christ of Calvary.

IN DEATH UNCHANGED

Clad in this strength the years of her life went singing by and as they passed they found her sphere of work ever extending until her plans compassed the earth. But through all she remained unchanged—she still trod the path of obscure Nazareth, the path of daily duty done in the ordinary way. She had a horror of anything uncommon.

See her as she effectually forbade her dead

daughter Aloysia to work cures—her grave was a centre that pilgrims came to, perturbing the calm of the cloister and hindering daily life. And with all, the tenderest charity—woman-hearted ever. See her in her last years when broken with infirmity and unable to walk, creeping upstairs on her knees to see if a sick novice had everything she needed.

And the crowning act of her humility ! “ If God hears my prayers,” she said, “ there will be no last words of mine to repeat when I am dead, for I shall say nothing.” And so it was. Without a word, selfless to the last, when the Call came, calmly and confidently she stepped upward into the Light of Full Vision.

HER SPIRIT LIVES

She has passed on, but her spirit lives still in her daughters, by whom it is nurtured with marvellous fidelity. They have made their home in all lands and preserved that spirit unchanged.

A few years ago I stood on a hill in the heart of a mighty continent. At my feet the broad flood of the Missouri swept seaward. There stood a little convent—the first convent of the Sacred Heart in North America. As I stood there my mind went back through the years and across the ocean to France, and I saw the giant-hearted Philippine Duchesne kneeling at the feet of our saint and imploring to be allowed to go to America to plant the Flag of the Sacred Heart there. For twelve long years she prayed thus. Then came an American bishop to St. Madeleine Sophie asking

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for help to evangelize the wilderness. She was reluctantly compelled to say No—the difficulties were too great, the time inopportune. Downcast at his failure the Bishop was walking to the door with our saint. Suddenly a nun comes speeding towards them, casts herself on her knees before St. Madeleine Sophie and implores her, “Consent, consent, oh, do consent !” It was M. Duchesne. And consent she did.

To-day houses of the Order cover that continent from the Atlantic to Pacific. Do you look for reasons for the increase? See the humility of Mother Duchesne begging to be deposed as unfit to govern ; see her in her old age spending eight hours daily before the Tabernacle in that little convent at St. Charles and you dimly realize the impetuous torrent of love that surged in that splendid soul, the source of streams that flowed out all conquering from ocean to ocean. It was the spirit of our Saint, conquering the New World as it had conquered the Old.

That spirit burned in the hearts of all the daughters of St. Madeleine Sophie. Sickness is powerless to daunt it. See that nun, only twenty-five years of age, wasted by biting disease to a shadow and just at the point of death. She hears the Mass bell and at once exclaims : “ My God, I am too weak, I can do nothing, but I can still love Thee,” and in a few moments was dead.

That spirit is as the martyr’s, and conquers pain.

See Mother Digby standing by a poor sufferer whose throat had to be cauterized with a red-hot

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plate of metal. Seeing that the sufferer shrank from the rude surgery of that day, Mother Digby bared her own arm, dropped the red-hot iron on it and let it burn unflinching—to give courage to the other.

That spirit is as the confessor's and knows no fear.

See those nuns who from our own land—Australia—went to evangelize Japan.

All were kneeling in the chapel at exposition on that day in 1923 when the devastating earthquake occurred that caused such destruction as to horrify the world.

There is nothing strikes fear into the human soul as does a severe earthquake : nothing leaves man so absolutely helpless. Strong men break in its terror and run aimlessly, mouthing in panic fear. And this earthquake was of such awful intensity that the whole world stood appalled.

See those daughters of Saint Madeleine Sophie. The altar crumbled at the shock and the fallen Monstrance lay amid the rattling ruins. Across the floor that was heaving like the sea, the nuns rush and seize the Monstrance and amid the falling tiles and bricks and breaking beams, carried it to the open air and then went back into the rocking, crumbling building for the ciborium.

A rare example of the truth that perfect love casteth out fear.

CORD OF LOVE

Look back and see our Saint as with bleeding fingers and streaming eyes she twisted the first

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strands of that Cord of Love—the Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. See that Cord to-day, grown to a mighty cable.

Firm-clasped by her daughters—a splendid company almost seven thousand strong—it now girdles the earth, while St. Madeleine Sophie holds its ends in Heaven, binding the earth in love to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

LESSON OF SAINT MADELEINE'S LIFE

Oh, the lesson of such a life : a life faithful to the highest ideal possible to mortal man : a life lived in unbroken union with God. How it speaks to us ! Speaks to us of the glory of the soul, a spirit blown to life by the Breath of God, transcending all else on earth and lifting man to the heights of Heaven : speaks to us of the priceless treasure of our faith compassing full truth and perfect happiness !

If all would but learn that lesson earth would be changed to Paradise.

To you—Daughters of that great Mother there is no need to speak. Your hearts are aflame with the same fire ; every moment of your lives is devoted to drawing that Cord of Love round humanity. What though at times your hands be bleeding and every fibre of your being racked with the task—in the strength of the spirit of your Mother you will press on, until the Fingers of Christ loosen your grip, and He finishes your work while He sends you to join your Mother in Heaven.

And you, O daughters of Australia, who have been privileged to be moulded in the school of our Saint,

to have your ideals fashioned in the Flame of her Spirit, and through her to realize the magnificence of our Faith and the grandeur of your destiny ! How your hearts must thrill to-day—thrill with a twofold joy—first as Catholics and secondly as daughters of the religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart ! Be worthy children of such a Mother.

She has shown you the illimitable power of a good woman.

The world to-day is worn with evil and the greatest force to lead it upward again to Christ is that of Woman, the Better-Half of Humanity. In the words of Holy Writ : “ As golden pillars on bases of silver, so are the firm feet upon the soles of a steady woman. As everlasting foundations upon the solid rock so the commandments of God in the heart of a holy woman.”

Truth alone can bring Liberty and Peace to a distracted world. “ Know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free,” says Holy Writ. You, oh, Catholic women, are the possessors of complete truth ; follow the glorious example of the power of Truth shown you by Saint Madeleine Sophie.

Resolve by prayer and sacrifice to labour zealously to make the treasure of our Faith known to all—for it is perfect Truth—that through it Liberty and Peace may come and lift the world to God.

Let us ask the Saint of the Sacred Heart to help us in this divine work.

Oh, Saint Madeleine Sophie, we thy children at the ends of the earth, pray thee that thou wilt fill all hearts with thy valiant spirit of love, thy fearless

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devotion to duty, thy unswerving faith, thy profound humility, and lead all to turn in love to the Sacred Heart of Him Whom thou didst love so well, our Brother, our Redeemer, our God, and our All—Christ Jesus.

HUMILITY AND FAITH
REV. JOSEPH BAMPTON, S.J.

XIV

HUMILITY AND FAITH

REV. JOSEPH BAMPTON, S.J.

"God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble."
—1 St. Peter v, 5.

By way of illustrating the text and of enforcing the lesson which the text conveys, let me begin with a reference to the well-known passage in the Gospels which relates the dealings of our Lord with the Centurion who, you remember, petitioned Christ to cure his sick servant, and was the author of the famous prayer, "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but only say the word and my servant shall be healed." I propose first to direct your attention to the narrative of that event.

Our Lord marvelled, we are told, at the Centurion's faith. "Amen, I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel" (St. Matt. viii, 10). And it is a marvel to us. What strikes us as so marvellous about it is the ease with which this man grasped something at least of the truth of Christ's Divinity. It would seem that until this meeting he had barely heard of Christ, "When he had heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him" (St. Luke vii, 3), he knew our Lord by hearsay, that was all. He was a Roman soldier, and therefore, we must suppose, a pagan, with as much knowledge of religion, with as much notion of a Supreme Being as the fantastic Roman

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mythology could give him with its plurality of deities, most of them preposterous and some of them revolting. Yet this man is able to confess our Lord at first sight to be the true God. For what else do his words mean? "Only say the word and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it" (St. Matt. viii, 8, 9). Observe the argument: If even I can exert such authority, I, who am myself subject to authority, subject to a higher authority than my own—the inference is plain, how much more easily canst Thou, for Thou art subject to none. But Thy servants are health and sickness, life and death, they are Thy ministers, at Thy beck and call. Thou canst say, "Go," and sickness and suffering flee at Thy bidding; Thou canst say, "Come," and health and strength return, they are under Thy authority, but Thou art under none. This is not merely to confess Christ to be a Divinity indeed, but some mythical deity of inferior degree, an Æsculapius, let us say, with *Dii Majores* to overrule his decrees. It is a confession of Christ as Supreme Lord of life and death. That is tantamount to a confession of Christ as the Supreme Being, the Supreme Arbiter of man's destinies here below, Supreme Lord and Master of all. A distinct acknowledgment of Christ's Divinity then, we may call it, coming at a first meeting from pagan lips. That was the marvel which excited our Lord's admiration. How can we account for it?

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We know little enough of the Centurion. Only some half-dozen verses in St. Matthew's Gospel (viii) devoted to this incident, and as many more, with a few additional details filled in, in St. Luke's (vii). That is all. But even in that little, one feature of the Centurion's character stands revealed with surprising distinctness, a feature which may give us the clue to his marvellous faith.

He was a Roman and, we should have expected, not free from the prejudices of a Roman of his day. As a Roman, he should have despised the Jew, at least as an outer barbarian. But he had a better reason, the Jews were a conquered race, and he was a member of an army of occupation, garrisoning the conquered country. The victors are not wont, in such circumstances, to bear themselves too meekly towards the vanquished. Yet of this man the Jews could say, "he loveth our race and hath built us a synagogue" (St. Luke vii, 5). Again, we should have expected to find him with some of the prejudices of his class. He was an officer of the Roman legion, a man accustomed to command and accustomed to be obeyed. "I say to this man, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doth it." To such a man a servant was one of the baser sort; to the Roman master, even at that date, the servant was a slave. Yet to the Centurion his servant was dear, "the servant of a certain centurion, who was dear to him, being sick" (St. Luke vii, 2). The master's concern about his sick servant was real, not assumed. "Yes, indications, these," you may say, "slight

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indications, no doubt, but such as they are, indications of a man, somewhat in advance of his age, superior to the prejudices of his time, of his race, of his station." I say they are indications of something more, of a finer, nobler, rarer quality. And what that is, appears more plainly as the story proceeds.

"Neither did I think myself worthy to come unto Thee" (St. Luke vii, 7), was the message he sent to our Lord, and his acts prove that he meant what he said. Hesitating to address himself directly to our Lord, he deposes the ancients of the Jews, in the first instance, to present his petition (St. Luke vii, 3), and then, "when our Lord was now not far from the house," his friends, to stay Him from coming further, "Lord, trouble not Thyself" (vii, 6), and it is only when our Lord insists on paying him a visit in his own home, that he comes in person to deprecate the honour: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof." And this from a Roman to a Jew: from a Roman centurion to one who was to all outward appearance a Jewish rabbi! There is something more here than superiority to racial antipathies or class distinctions, something more than inbred courtesy or refinement of nature. "Lord, I am not worthy." Those words express the sense of unworthiness, the humble-mindedness, which is the very core, the pith and marrow of true humility. And the Christian Church has adopted and consecrated those words of the pagan centurion. She has found none better for the one moment in her liturgy that calls most for the "prayer of him that humbleth himself." Then,

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when the priest bends low at the altar and the people kneel at the altar-rails, and Jesus of Nazareth draws nigh once more, the Church has found no words better fitted to express her own lowly welcome of her Divine Guest, none more suitable to express all the outpourings of the humble Christian soul, than the words of that blunt Roman soldier—*Domine non sum dignus*—"Lord, I am not worthy," for she has found none more expressive of profound, of adoring humility.

Why did faith come so quickly to the Centurion? Need we repeat the question now? Why does faith come to any? why does faith come at all? Faith is of God's pure bounty. Faith is a grace of God. "By His grace," St. Paul tells us (Rom. iii, 24), "we are justified freely." Grace is God's free gift, free to be given or withheld, free to be given to this one or that, free in the time and the manner and the measure of its giving, in all its operations free as air: it is our Lord's own illustration—"the Spirit breatheth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh or whither it goeth" (St. John iii, 8). But though grace comes free to all, we know who those are to whom it comes most and comes oftenest and comes quickest. We know, for God's own Word tells us, that "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

And the Centurion was a humble man. That goes some way towards explaining the marvel of his faith. The Centurion's humility gives us the clue to the Centurion's faith.

But can we pursue our inquiry one step further?

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God gives grace to the humble. God gives the grace of faith to the humble-minded. May we ask why to the humble-minded? "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth," Christ once said (St. Matt. xi, 25), because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Even so, Father, for so it hath seemed good in Thy sight." God reveals these things to little ones, God gives the grace of faith to the humble-minded, because such is His good will and pleasure. That is the only ultimate reason that can be given. Ultimately, we have to be content with the fact.

But can we discover any special fitness in that fact? Any peculiar affinity between humble-mindedness and faith, which may help in any degree to explain this wondrous attraction of God to the humble soul? I think we can.

Humility, and by humility I mean throughout humble-mindedness, the being lowly in our own eyes, the being little in our own esteem—that rough definition will serve our present purpose—humility, then, so understood, has, it is to be feared, an evil sound in the ears of mankind in general; neither word nor thing, let us frankly admit it, has ever found much favour with the men of our race and blood. To be humble-minded is to be weak-minded, is it not? mean-spirited? And where you speak of faith, you mean, do you not, by humble-mindedness, an abject condition of mind that amounts to servility, a deplorable lack of proper independence of thought and judgment? Qualities these, that hardly com-

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mend themselves to the sturdy northern nature, scarcely the qualities that go to the making of Empire, hardly suited, then, to an Imperial race like ours !

But is there anything in the Centurion's story to show that he was weak-minded or poor-spirited ? Take those words of his—" I say to this man, Go "—and the rest. Do they betray any want of a proper spirit of independence ? And was not he, too, a citizen of a dominant, an Imperial race, a Roman of the days when Rome was mistress of the world ? There must be something wrong in a conception of humility of mind which would make it akin to weak-mindedness, to pusillanimity. There is something wrong, radically wrong.

Humility—if the word has an unpleasant sound, let us substitute another for it, for the moment. For the moment, let us call it modesty. We all know what is meant by modesty in a man ; we are quick to recognize and respect it. We respect the man who is modest about his own sayings and doings, who has a modest sense of his gifts, natural or acquired, of his abilities, attainments, achievements ; the man who has a due sense of the relative proportion of things and of his own place in the scheme of things. Such modesty is a part, no little part, of practical self-knowledge. And the man who best knows himself, his nature, physical, intellectual, moral, his powers and their limitations, his qualities and the defects of his qualities, the man who best knows his own strength and weakness, the good and bad, nay, the best and worst that is in him, and

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dreams no dreams and cherishes no illusions about himself, he is most likely to be a modest man. But that is only saying he is in least danger of being, consciously and deliberately, a proud man. For modesty is only an exchange of terms for the humility of mind I am at present speaking of. Modesty, then, humility of mind, is to know ourselves for what we are, and to appreciate ourselves at our true worth. It is the simple recognition of the truth about ourselves. But this is in the mind what truth is in the mouth. Verbal truth—I am not speaking directly of verbal truth in the sense of moral truthfulness, though perhaps the connection is closer than might appear at first sight—verbal truth, objectively considered, is agreement of speech with fact. And humble-mindedness is that agreement of concept, of thought with fact, in which all truth of mind consists. But this is not weak-mindedness, it is truthful-mindedness. Humble-mindedness is truthfulness of mind.

We are trying to discover the affinity between it and faith.

So far I have spoken of this humble-mindedness as a natural quality, as the Centurion may have possessed it before grace came to him. To such a man, to a man like the Centurion, with native modesty, with natural humility like his, God offers, we suppose, the gift of faith. Faith has its difficulties, often many and great. To the humble mind, its difficulties are smaller and fewer. For the humble mind is a truthful mind—a mind, therefore, open for the reception of truth, from whatever

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quarter it comes. The mind that knows the truth about itself, so far as nature can enlighten it, is the readiest, the ripest to know the truth about God, so far as He is pleased to reveal it. The recognition of facts in one order has prepared it for the recognition of facts in another, for such facts, let us say, as these: that the created intelligence is finite, and that Uncreated Truth is infinite, that, consequently, there may be, there must be truths beyond the power of human reason to discover and beyond the power of human reason to comprehend; that such truths can, therefore, be made known to men only by Divine revelation; that a revelation of God to man is, at least, a possibility; that all history, all tradition, conspire to declare some such revelation to be a fact; that there is a mass—an enormous mass of evidence to prove the Christian Church to be the sole depository of the revelation of God to man; and that, in presence of God's revelation, made known through His Church, when once that Church has proved its credentials to speak in God's name, the only possible attitude of mind is submission; we can but bow our reason to accept, we can but bend our will to obey, and there is no indignity in such submission, but once more that frank recognition of the truth, that conformity of thought with fact, which constitutes truthfulness of mind.

“When once the Church has proved its credentials to speak in God's name.” That is an important qualification, you tell me—the Church's credentials have to be proved. Precisely, but I am not concerned to prove them now. I am not now arguing that the

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Church is right. That is not my point. I am arguing that submission of mind is not wrong to a Church believed to be right, and that then the recognition of the duty of submission is to be called, not feebleness, but truthfulness of mind.

Is this truthfulness of mind, then, faith? Not yet. The grace of God is needed yet. It still needs that illumination and inspiration from the Most High which we call grace. But that is all that is needed now, only a ray of light flashed from God's countenance, only the touch of God's hand, to enable the mind to believe without doubting, on the sole authority of God revealing, only that, and then what was human certitude has become Divine faith.

We have spoken of a truthfulness of mind which is humility and a truthfulness of mind which comes very near to faith, as near as the human can come to the Divine. Herein lies the affinity between humility and faith. "The connection," you would have said, "is obvious. Faith requires the yielding spirit, the submissive spirit, and the submissive spirit is the humble spirit." That is true. But the affinity, I think, lies deeper. Faith requires the truthful spirit, the spirit that accepts the truth, when to accept the truth is hard, to accept the truth is galling to flesh and blood, and that truthful spirit is the humble spirit. Truth is the connecting link between humility and faith. There is the affinity we sought to explain.

And the attraction of God to the humble soul—that is not hard to explain now. It is the attraction of Truth to what is truthful. To the humble God is

attracted, from the proud He is repelled. He resisteth the proud, He beholdeth the high things from afar (Psalm cxxxvii, 6), and keepeth them at a distance, He scattereth the proud in the conceit of their heart (St. Luke i, 51). Not by choice merely, but by necessity, by a necessary law of His Being, the proud are an abomination to the Lord (Prov. xvi, 5). The opposition between Him and them is the opposition between light and darkness, because God is Light and in Him there is not any darkness (1 St. John i, 5), and pride is the darkness of blindness and self-deceit: it is the antagonism between truth and falsehood, because God is Truth and pride is a lie.

Therefore it is that God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. There is a special fitness in that fact.

Humility admits of many degrees. Many degrees separate the humility of the Christian from the humility of the Saint. What we have been considering is the humility of the Christian, the degree of humility which is indispensable for Christian faith. And the humility required for Christian faith embraces humility of mind and humility of will. Perhaps the two are inseparable. We have been concerned directly only with humility of mind, and what we have sought to establish is that the humble-mindedness which is essential to faith is not weak-mindedness or degradation of the intellect, but a temper of mind which those should be the last to decry who are earnest seekers after truth in any field where truth is to be found, historical truth, philo-

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sophical truth, scientific truth, the very temper of mind, with due allowance made for the difference between the claims of natural and supernatural truth upon our acceptance, which should animate them, and that is the truthfulness of mind which is identical with humility, and is the only truly philosophical, the only truly scientific temper of mind.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell.

A man who declares that he finds it impossible to believe would do well to look into himself, the defect may be there. Do not let him flatter himself that his difficulty comes from a proper independence of thought and judgment which becomes a man. His difficulty may come from a lack of proper modesty and truthful-mindedness which become a man even more.

We must be prepared to hear faith called childishness, foolishness, intellectual slavery, by those who *quæcumque ignorant, blasphemant* (St. Jude x), blaspheme what they do not know. Childishness it is, in a sense, the childishness of those who have become as little children that they may enter the Kingdom of Heaven (St. Matt. xviii, 3), and foolishness, for "to the Jews it is a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness" (1 Cor. i, 23), yes, and slavery too, in a sense, for St. Paul would call it (2 Cor. x, 5) the "captivity of the understanding unto the obedience of Christ"—and to the men of St. Paul's day captivity meant slavery. Childishness, foolishness, slavery, these are hard words. But

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we can bear them better when we remember Who it was Who for our sakes wore the swaddling-clothes of the child, and the white robe of the fool, and the *formam servi*—the form of a slave (Phil. ii, 7), and humbled Himself, being made obedient, that by His own example He might enforce His painful but necessary precept—Learn of Me, because I am meek *et humilis corde*—Learn of Me to be humble-minded.

THE MASS
REV. PIUS CAROLAN, C.P.

XV

THE MASS

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"For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord, until He come."—I Corinthians xi, 26.

EVERY man that has thought seriously of the mysteries of life and death has stood appalled sometimes at the problem of suffering. He may evade that problem by simply refusing to consider it ; or he may take refuge in a crude materialism or a cruder spiritism ; or he may become that very religious type, the vehement and defiant atheist. With these men there is no intellectual advance, no preparation of the soul for the mighty problem that throbs through every part of the universe. To the vast majority of men, intellectually convinced of the existence and consequently the essential goodness of a Personal God, the problem is not less acute indeed in the speculative order ; but in the practical order, we have reached the point (not because we desire security at the expense of truth) of accepting pain—nay, embracing it—in union with a suffering God-man, and are content to leave the final solution until He show us the full meaning of it all. This heritage of suffering, physical and mental, we Catholics ascribe to a very definite thing called the Fall ; and Science, as so often happens, is now

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beginning to say the same thing in different words. For in the beginning, man walked and talked with God and his being was at peace. When he was tempted by the wily promise of the father of lies : Ye shall be as gods, and he gave way to the tempter, he found himself not a god or a son of god, but something less than he had been ; with a state of war in his own being, and a fearful chasm between him and his Maker. God—and man ! God reigning in the isolation of a high Heaven ! And man grovelling on the earth, his will in the dust, and his heart sometimes yearning for the stars. He found, then, from some deep law in his suffering being that the thing called sacrifice was necessary if he were not to lose the memory and consciousness of God entirely. In spite of the war in his members and in his mind, he knew that God was his First Beginning and his Last End ; and, in a dim kind of way, that there is no lasting happiness for the creature except in the Creator. And to express his worship and his sense of absolute dependence, he set aside something dear to him—a sheep of his flock or the first yield of his land—and dedicated it to his Lord. It was the only way he could find to express his knowledge of God's sovereignty : by death or destruction as a sign of interior cult, of self-dedication, he sought to propitiate the Lord of Life. And God accepted this worship, clumsy and material however it seemed ; as a father accepts the flower that grew in his own garden as a gift from his child. Nay, God definitely ordained a scheme of sacrifice for His chosen people, and in His mercy received them as an odour of sweet

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incense : the incense of a people's dedication to Him, and much more, the incense of a prophecy whose fulfilment would make the sons of men the sons of God once more. That is the meaning of the Old Testament : it is a terrific drama—the wooing of humanity by the tremendous Lover, God. God must be served even if humanity be nearly destroyed in learning that lesson, for in its knowledge alone can man find peace. And God must be served in the way that man's nature dictated, and God's will endorsed : the way of sacrifice. During that period of travail, of mistakes, of heroism, of cowardice, men came with the spirit of God upon them saying terrible and splendid things ; revealing more and more clearly the Redeemer to come who would Himself be given in sacrifice for mankind for evermore. Thus until Malachi, some four hundred years before Christ. And after him, a great hush of prophecy, as if the time of fulfilment were at hand when God's great secret would be made plain to men.

In the fullness of time, when Mary conceived the Holy Thing, we have the new beginning. For in her womb were God and Man in one Person : the bridge over that abyss across which God had looked yearningly on man, man sometimes answering with cries of anguish, but more often turning to gods of wood or stone or flesh or gold—hungering for God the while. Christ was the God-man : a complete and perfect human nature united to the Second Person of the Trinity. And from the first instant of His conception, He was a priest ; for the chief purpose

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of His Incarnation was to redeem His people from their sins *by sacrifice*. Death was not to be simply the termination of Christ's life: it was the main reason of His life. He was born *in order to die*. The Passion and Death of Jesus was God's own devotion from all eternity. Sometimes Christ's longing for His sacrifice would break from Him in passionate words: "I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" "How am I straitened, hedged round, confined until I am nailed to a cross!"

It is amazing to watch the life of the God-man nearing its climax. The sense of climax, of terrific interplay of spiritual forces, is most acute at the Last Supper. For on the night before He suffered He took bread, blessed, brake and gave to His disciples. "This is my Body which is given for you." Likewise with the Cup: "This is my Blood which is shed for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me." What *could* the words mean but the one thing only: that He there and then by the will of His omnipotence changed the bread He held into His very Body, and the wine into His very Blood? As St. John expressed the mystery of the Incarnation in the simple sentence: The Word was made flesh, so Jesus accomplished and revealed the tremendous mystery of The Eucharist by a few short words. . . . It was the first Mass. It was the first ordination of priests of the New Testament: Do *this* . . . It was as real a sacrifice in its own order as the Life that went out the next day on Calvary. "My Body . . . which is *given* for you." Yet it

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was not the sacrifice of our Redemption : that was accomplished once for all on Golgotha. Therein are Catholics and Protestants at one. So far from trying to obscure the oneness and all-sufficiency of Christ's redemptive sacrifice as laid down so clearly in the Epistle of the Hebrews, Catholics for nearly two thousand years have made that fact the very centre of the dogmatic system. Without the natural sacrifice of the God-man, i.e. the actual shedding of blood unto death discernible by the senses, the sacramental sacrifice of The Supper and The Mass simply could not be. A presentation or re-presentation must be based on an actual event worked out or to be worked out on the canvas of the world's history. It is *just because* Calvary is superabundant in its satisfactory and meritorious power, *just because* it is a Divine act not to be circumscribed by time, that it was sacramentally anticipated in the Supper and is sacramentally continued in the Mass. By the death of the God-man—that is, let me repeat—the actual sundering of the Body and Blood, all mankind was redeemed. Calvary is the universal principle of redemption : an inexhaustible reservoir of power and grace. But Calvary does not of itself *save* each individual man. If it did, Baptism would be quite unnecessary even in the Protestant system. And Baptism, which derives all its efficacy from the Cross, certainly does not dishonour Calvary. . . . Of what use, then, a reservoir if it is left untapped ? The bringing of the individual soul into contact with Christ at the moment when Christ was supremely *Victim* is done by the Mass. To say that

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this contact should be had by faith alone is to deny the whole sacramental system instituted by Our Lord. To say that the Mass does dishonour to the all-sufficiency of Calvary is a complete misunderstanding of sacramental Theology. The fact that the Cross and the Mass are in different orders of reality: the former, the natural sacrifice of Christ, the latter, the sacrament—sacrifice of the same Christ, preserves the oneness of the Victim and at the same time shows not merely the numerical but also the specific duality of the sacrifices. And be not troubled because you cannot see or understand any mactation in Christ. There is none. Christ is in glory and can suffer no more. Hold fast to this great truth with all the strength and serenity of Catholic tradition: that the Mass is a sacrifice in the sacrament order; that it is the sign of a natural sacrifice once for ever accomplished; that it is not a mere symbol, an empty memorial drama, a Passion play, as is the Anglican "Mass," but that being a sacrament, it effects what it signifies, i.e. places on the altar in virtue of the omnipotence of the will and words of Jesus, the Body of Christ sundered sacrificially from the Blood, and the Blood apart from the Body. All the change is in the substance of the Bread and Wine. Anything that happens over and above this showing forth of the Lord's death—the fact, for instance, that it is the living, glorified Christ we possess in the Blessed Sacrament—is in virtue of natural or supernatural concomitance and has nothing to do with the Mass as a sacrifice. This is the faith

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of the Saints. If the Mass is not a real sacrifice, Malachy's prophecy is a lie. If the Mass is not real sacrifice the Catholic Faith has been guilty of the grossest idolatry from the time of the Apostles. If the Mass is not a real sacrifice, Christianity is not a real religion, for sacrifice is an essential of religion, and Calvary is outside Christianity in the point of historic time.

The Mass is a sacrifice of adoration. By it we *adore* God perfectly, and God dare not refuse our worship because it is joined with that of His Incarnate Son. Thus, the first and most essential act of religion is performed perfectly in virtue of the Mass. And this not simply by the devout priest, but by all who assist intensely "Unto us a Son is given"—given, not lent. Unto us (the members of the Church) a sacrifice is given. The Mass is ours. It does not belong to Heaven. It is for us wayfarers until Christ come again.

The Mass is a sacrifice of thanksgiving. By it we thank God adequately in union with the Thanksgiving of His Son. And God loves to be thanked for His graces and benefits to the Church, to the world, to our friends, to our enemies, and to ourselves.

The Mass is a sacrifice of propitiation for sin, because it is the application to the individual soul of the satisfaction and merit of Calvary. Any man hearing Mass with faith and devotion, however sin-stained his soul, infallibly receives sufficient grace to make a good sacramental confession. Any man hearing Mass devoutly and with attrition for his

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venial sins is by the power of the Mass and without more ado, cleansed from those sins. The Mass is *the great* means of salvation. "It is the Mass that matters."

The Mass is a sacrifice of petition. There is not a spiritual favour, but we can gain through the Mass. Nay, there is not a temporal blessing really helpful to our soul's salvation but God will give in virtue of the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of His Son.

And all these things are true—wonderfully, gloriously, divinely true! Just as every outstanding event in the history of Jesus of Nazareth is continued in the Church, which is Christ writ large, so the Mass is the continuation of the Passion and Death of the God-man. The Mass is God's own devotion. We are not wiser than God.

Nor should we be content with a mere intellectual appreciation of this revelation or a mere passive assistance at Mass on Sunday. We need, above all things, *intensity* in assisting at The Holy Sacrifice. . . . The priest comes forth robed in the garments of Christ's Passion, conscious of his own weakness and infirmity. He confesses his sinfulness before the whole court of Heaven, and before the congregation. He prays that he may be made worthy to go up unto the Altar of God. With him we join—sinners, acknowledging our unworthiness from our hearts. The touching prayer for mercy in Greek—Kyrie eleison—reminds us of the antiquity and universality of the Catholic Church. Our souls should rise up on the surge of the Gloria—the

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angels' hymn—one of the purest gems of liturgy. At the Gospel we stand as a sign of our faith and our consciousness that in the Catholic Church we have the monopoly of God's revelation; that no other creed has any supernatural truth except what is borrowed from Catholicism. Then the majestic sweep of the Credo—stretching from the beginning of God's eternity to our resurrection in Christ Jesus! The Church's grand act of faith! We accept deliberately with our mind and embrace intensely with our will every article in this tremendous litany. When the priest offers the bread and wine we make offering of ourselves—all that we have and all that we are; and when he cleanses his fingers, we beseech Our Lord to wash us yet more from our iniquities. We are a party to that sublime dialogue which inaugurates the Preface. And the Preface itself! The noble, soaring prayer that raises our hearts higher and higher until for very ecstasy we cry with the angels before the tri-une God, Holy, Holy, Holy; joining to it the harmony of earth, Hosanna to the Son of David! Of what follows, the Holy of Holies of the great rite, who can speak? The priest is now a sacrament, a manifestation of Christ. The human personality is submerged. The same will that operated in the Cenacle grips the intention and voice of the priest as instruments to Its great purpose. And as the priest bends over the bread and wine and whispers the words of Omnipotence, the curtain of time is drawn back and we are face to face with the Victim of Calvary. The same words; the same Omnipotent Will; the same

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Personality effecting and offering ; the same Victim by transubstantiation. Oh, the love of Jesus Christ ! If ever our worship is a reality, it is now. Our whole being is spread out in absolute adoration ; will, intellect, imagination, passions, body. Like Mary at the foot of the Cross . . . or rather, like Magdalen kneeling there in an abandonment of love and self-oblation. It is *our* sacrifice, and we offer ourselves with it. The medium of words breaks down here : we are in the inner sanctuary of holiness and grace. Thus we remain in a hush of adoration and love ; making our petitions of the Pater Noster in the company of Jesus. We partake of the Victim in Communion and become " partakers of the Divine Nature." Strengthening our will, is the will of Christ. Illumining our intellect, is the mind of Christ. The Sacred Heart is ours. The Precious Blood cleanses us. The Sacred Body tabernacles our soul. Within the tiny circle of our being, the eternal evolution of the Trinity goes on. . . . When, at the end, the priest says, " Ita, Missa est," he does not mean simply, " Go, it is finished " ; but, " go, you are sent ; go, in the light and strength of this Sacrifice and do your duty ; go, and lose your life that you may find it ; go, and work for causes that demand sacrifice, remembering that your God is a crucified Jew."

Truly, " it is the Mass that matters." Sermons, processions, controversy, works of mercy and the rest have their place, and are of great avail to the spread of Christ's Kingdom. But the conversion of England and America, the sanctification of Ireland,

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the final realization of the Plenitude of Christ will come through the Mass. For the Mass is God's own devotion. The Mass is God's great means for the salvation of the world.

THEIR OWN OLIVE TREE

REV. A. F. DAY, S.J.

XVI

THEIR OWN OLIVE TREE

REV. A. F. DAY, S.J.

" Their own olive tree."—Romans xi, 24.

THE olive branch has been accepted with scriptural warrant as the emblem of peace, and few would deny that even a single olive berry is a good gift of God. What praise then is too great for the parent tree? As a source of this precious fruit, it is indeed a no small boon from heaven. To beauty and grace it makes no special claim: trees that are barren of human food may well be adorned, in compensation, with a larger dowry of good looks. Amidst brighter foliage it strikes a note of sombre recollection, reserve, solemnity; it has no need to advertise its goods, well known to all and valued everywhere. God has blessed "Oliva," like Leah, with fertility beyond her comrades and from her flows a river of health, a stream that is meat and drink at once and rays of light as from the sun. At this kindly source the athlete adds to his strength and suppleness, the wrestler equips himself for the fray. Rightly do the singers of Israel associate thee, O Olive, with the corn that builds up the body and the wine that gladdens the heart—a fair and seemly trinity for which our meed of thanks is all too slender. With the choice sap from thy veins are kings, priests and prophets anointed to their office, and the Name

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which is above all names, as its bearer is above all creatures, is likened to thy tide poured forth. The vine has inspired hosts of songsters ; the olive has not yet received its due ; although long ago, according to a venerable legend, " the trees once went to anoint a king over them and they said to the olive tree : Come and reign over us " (Judges ix, 8). However, the olive " would not leave its fatness to be promoted amongst the trees." But it was reserved for the New Testament to set the olive in its true glory. St. Paul makes it the central figure of a parable of supreme importance and intense interest, inserting it with elaborate care at the culminating point of a great and crucial argument. It is in the shade of this Pauline olive that we may spend together a very profitable half-hour : or rather let us clamber into its midst and like another Zaccheus look out on the world from that modest eminence.

The Apostle in the previous chapter of the epistle that gives us our text has manfully wrestled with problems that tax sorely our puny faculties. He grapples with the relative functions of nature and grace, shows the manifold defects of legalism in religion and extols the majesty of freedom acting under the loving control of divine influence and raised to the heavenly order. He proclaims the Great Charter of Justification by Faith—a free gift of God offered to all without distinction. He goes back to the fountain-head of the promises : it is from the uncircumcised but believing Abraham that the family of the just are descended, that Abraham

“ who staggered not by distrust ; but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God ” (Rom. iv, 20). Nor did the promise extend to all his descendants, but was restricted at every stage. It was the remnant, not the main body that received the heirloom of faith. For, unlike their Father, they—the main body—stumbled at the stumbling-stone and would not accept the “ Second Adam ”—the sign that, as Simeon foretold, was set up to be contradicted. Such thoughts, which we can only epitomise, lead swiftly to the great pæan—“ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ” (Rom. viii, 31 ad. f.). And so, following by every clue we can the mysterious and masterly workings of the inspired and mighty mind of our Rabbinic guide we are confronted with the horror of the “ Great Refusal.” Logic and revelation have led the Apostle to this point—to the brink of the precipice—and suddenly the Jew awakes in his soul and he shudders from head to foot at the thought of the peril that has befallen his compatriots : the children of the illustrious ancestors of the Messiah, unmindful of their high destiny have declined the glorious part assigned to them in the drama of the world. Patriot though he be, he will not deny their faults and failings—their hardness of heart and lack of docility, their trust in outward forms and easy confidence in superficial virtues ; but he will not abandon his people ; there is at least a faithful remnant that never bowed the knee to Baal, that welcomed the Messiah and formed the substance of the Infant Church. Glorifying in descent from Abraham, a Benjamite to the backbone,

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he is torn asunder at the sight of the national catastrophe. When read in this light the so-called epistle becomes an epic ; it is a tragedy rather than a treatise, the outpouring of a great soul deeply stirred. In vision he sees the hosts of Israel rushing blindly into the abyss : what comfort can he give to his wellnigh broken heart ? At least he and a handful of loyalists have hailed the Son of David and fought to make him king. No modesty could tempt him to deny that since his surrender on the road to Damascus he has been the devoted liegeman of the Nazarene ; the dedication made then in the dust of conversion has been steadfastly intensified. True he has set himself mainly to capture the Gentiles, but even in that chosen apostolate there has been an undercurrent of motive : he has hoped, alas with little success, that when his own folk saw the change wrought in the heathen they would rally to Jesus at last, if only from jealousy (Rom. xi, 14). Hence his " great sadness and continual sorrow of heart." Poor Paul, across the centuries we cannot help pitying you still for that agony of a strong and sympathetic soul !

The scene shifts : in the depths of dismay he remembers the olive tree, and, downcast as once the prophet of Carmel under other foliage, finds consolation in its shade. A soothing meditation takes form within his spirit. His people—God's people—is typified by the olive. Shattered it may be, rent by the bolts of Heaven's wrath, shorn of its majesty, its dignity almost destroyed, the wreck of what it once was, when its rich crop on outspread branches glad-

dened the countryside. Yes ; sin and folly have played havoc with the Olive tree of Israel. One fateful day the fair scion of Jesse came seeking fruit, and it denied Him its tribute. It was the heir who came and they put Him to death : the trees mourned for him and the mountains moaned. Surely the House of Israel shall pay sorely for this deed of darkness ! Ay ; but the roots are sound—"the Fathers are still most dear to God." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—those names are as music still in the courts of heaven. How true they were to the light that led them amid the gloom of their earthly pilgrimage, how trustful and how generous towards God and man ! As splendid figures they stand out from the mists of the early morning history of the world, foremost amongst the worthies of the human race. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—names saturated in all that is best belonging to earth and heaven, cherished in countless bosoms in all the continents of the globe. Abraham who saw from afar the day of Redemption and rejoiced, Isaac privileged to rehearse the rôle of the Victim of Calvary, Jacob who wrestled all night with the angel and would not own himself beaten until he was blessed. Truly the Apostle, although in such a matter not quite impartial, is right when he claims as an advocate of his people that with such a root the branches can scarcely be utterly dead : ". . . A tree hath hope : if it be cut, it groweth green again and the boughs thereof sprout. If its root be old in the earth, be dead in the dust ; at the scent of water, it shall revive and its stock spring and bring forth leaves,

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as when first it was planted " (Job xiv, 7, 8, 9).

Nor is this Mystic Olive only for the favoured ones : has not the adopted posterity of the Patriarch, his not by blood but by election, the wild oleasters that nobody cared for, have they not been affiliated by grace—by grafting—into this hallowed family tree ? Uncultured olives ourselves, whose berries are barely fit for the swine, we enjoy the hospitality of the grand old stock and draw our very life-blood from its rich reservoir. " The Lord called thy name a plentiful Olive Tree, fair, fruitful and beautiful," as testifies the prophet Jeremiah (xi, 16) ; but the tragedy follows swiftly on the heels of this soothing speech : " at the noise of a word a great fire was kindled in it and the branches thereof are burnt." We are back again at the disaster. It is impossible to escape it. Nor was it for want of warning or entreaty : " all the day long have I spread my hands to a people that believeth not and contradicteth me " (Isa. lxxv, 2). And so the wild olive was sought, that had done nothing to deserve the favour, taken from its idolatries and incorporated into the royal line. " It is for the good of the tree : we will revive it." " Perhaps, but be humble and modest, graft from the desert soil ; for if thou dare to boast, the retort will be flung in thy teeth : thou bearest not the root ; it is the root that beareth thee." Some of the branches are broken, but there are others intact and all have drawn their sustenance from that old and honourable stem. Listen to the answer which St. Paul as apologist for his race gives to his question : " Have they all stumbled that they should

fall ? ”—which perhaps we may paraphrase, “ is it a complete collapse ? ” There is no beating about the bush ; two short words give us the reply : “ God forbid.” He will not have it—and goes on to remind us that that cataclysm was the occasion of our promotion, introducing barbaric hordes on to the stage of God’s great human drama, which up till then heroes like Moses, Josue, Samuel, Elias and David, and heroines to match, had held all to themselves. Gratitude must seal our lips against any word of reproach. And if their offence and disgrace—we will not deny or disguise them—have provided the opportunity for such a mighty manifestation of God’s mercy to the others—to the “ outlanders ”—who can fail to see that when the “ Children of Israel ” return and are reinstated—“ grafted into their own olive tree ”—a new era will open for the Catholic Church and a spirit of youth miraculously renewed shall pervade its uttermost bounds. To sum it up in our apostle’s short, but eloquent, phrase : “ What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead ? ” Nor will he seem to allow that the Covenant can have been broken beyond repair : “ For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance.”

Nor must the Gentiles be over-confident ; if the favourites of God have fallen away “ and God hath not spared the natural branches ; be not without fear lest He also spare not thee.” Consider both “ the severity and the goodness of God, lest thou also be cut off.”

In refusing the Gospel and in misrepresenting its

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message, they have, as St. Paul admits, played the part of enemies : the folly of their first false step committed them to a policy of antagonism which has been too often reciprocated. Our attitude should surely be to take no offence beyond what we are bound in loyalty to the Master and to regard them in all their aberrations as " very dear for the sake of the Fathers." In their faces you will discern the family likeness nor will we forget that our Saviour and their's, according to the flesh, was and is heir in the direct line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Even the broken branches, by some divine favouritism not altogether withheld, manifest something still of their evergreen birthright. It is, for instance, almost universally admitted that they set us on the whole a fine example of the domestic virtues and fight the battle of life with vigour and persistence, refusing to recognize defeat. Centuries of anomalous existence have left their scars ; but for those disfigurements of the battlefield generous allowance should be made. The friction between Jew and Christian has been inevitable nor is it possible to decide the proportion of blame. Indeed it would be almost unseemly to discuss the subject in a sermon. God is the judge Who alone reads all the riddles of the human heart : He is also the Father of all. But certain it is, that we as Christians having received a fuller testament of love, it is for us to show a bright example of that forgiveness which should shine out in the disciples of Him who on His cruel death-bed made the prayer : " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

The attitude of many modern Jews towards Christianity is exasperating to an earnest Christian ; but by putting ourselves in their position we may extenuate the fault. Once religion and race have been falsely identified, any attempt to alter the religious beliefs of the erring people is sure to be bitterly resented : the spirit of nationalism, which so often takes precedence of truth, demands it. From the olive we must learn a lesson : oil will work wonders, when vinegar only makes matters worse. A process of lubrication, in a strictly spiritual sense, must precede and accompany every apostolic advance. The descendants, even though only according to the flesh, of the Israelites of old are entitled to special treatment at the hands of Catholics. We have so much in common and might have so much more. A reunion between Rome and Jerusalem would indeed gladden the angelic choirs. With two such world centres—again we speak spiritually—and with such invincible reinforcements, religion would needs advance by leaps and bounds, making conquests undreamt of in the past. The “diminution of them”—St. Paul’s strange and pregnant phrase in referring to their defection—brought spiritual wealth untold to the Gentiles ; “how much more the fullness (‘pleroma’) of them ?” But beware of understanding this solely or mainly in terms of numerical superiority. Rightly we long for big battalions ; but quality, as in Gideon’s tiny regiment, is more vital still.

Remember we are looking out from an olive-tree, and we have chosen the oldest and the gloomiest of

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that clump of olives in the Garden of Gethsemane, in which Jesus trod the wine-press alone : the contrast between the depths of sorrow and the heights of exultation will be all in our favour. It is here that we may, in the first place, view the future and the past in that grim presentment that caused the Saviour that deathly agony. Then, after we have brooded awhile—man is not capable of protracted grief—on the almost endless series of sins and apostacies, we will pierce the black cloud of human wickedness and revive ourselves with a glimpse of the glowing and glistening panorama beyond. It is the vision of the Olive Tree ; the resurrection of the House of Israel. We have walked with Ezekiel (xxxvii) “ in the midst of a plain that was full of bones ” and have been startled to see them re-animated in an instant by the breath of “ the Spirit of the four winds ” leap up “ an army exceeding great.” We gaze on the reinforcements that have so miraculously come to the rescue, in all their freshness and valour of soul, their casques and cuirasses shining in the sun. How different the scene from that sad night when Judas, the inheritor of the proud name of the Lion Tribe, wrecked his immortal soul with a perfidious kiss. Review them as they sweep by in sparkling panoply, the flower of Israel’s chivalry, bent, as they ride on their high-hearted crusade, on one thing and on one thing alone—to set the Son of David aloft on a throne of state firmly established, to reign for aye from Sion’s topmost crest. Thus will they redeem a tainted past and save the honour of the patriarchs and prophets.

To revert to the shadows for a moment. Was it not Osee who wrote : " Thou shalt wait for me many days . . . and I also will wait for thee. For the children of Israel shall sit many days without king, without prince, without sacrifice and without altar . . . and after this the Children of Israel shall return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their King ; and they shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the last days " (iii, 3, 4, 5). Yes, they have sate many days in sad spiritual destitution ; but they have returned at long last and found the second and greater Moses to lead them through the desert of life into the land of the living. They have mustered in their millions ; the Seers of Israel have not deceived us : the God of Jacob has not failed His people ; Christ has not failed His Church. Nay, He has treated us right royally and given us " His own " who failed to recognize Him and have come at last to their senses, to be our chief auxiliaries. Such seen through the eyes of our faithful guide is the pageant of the grafting " into their own olive tree." Thus will the great cycle be completed. Thrice in his inspired harangue to the Romans has our orator—we can scarcely think of him for the moment as a letter-writer—unable to repress the torrent of his feelings, betrayed that he is poet and musician as well : the blare of the trumpets has been unmistakable and now at the climax the orchestra bursts forth and the organ swells to its fullest compass. All have been involved, Jew and Gentile, in the mutiny against the Creator and He from the serene heights of His abode has tolerated

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our insubordination in order to magnify His mercy.
“ . . . O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and
of the knowledge of God ! How incomprehensible
are His judgments, and how unsearchable His
ways ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ?
or who hath been his counsellor or who hath first
given to Him and recompense shall be made to
Him ? For of Him and by Him and in Him, are all
things : to Him be glory for ever. Amen.”

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Let a gentle whisper follow this mighty blast.
Osee shall speak again :

“ I will be as the dew. Israel shall spring up as the lily :
His branches shall spread and his glory shall be as
the olive tree.

They shall be converted who sit under his shadow.”

(14 : 6, 7, 8.)

Amen ! Amen !

And the sweet maid of Nazareth, the village of
flowers—Ruth, Judith and Esther all in one and
greater and fairer than all the daughters of Israel—
—the “ *Oliva speciosissima* ”—shall add her Magnifi-
cat to the Te Deum of the Heavenly Host. And all,
all shall pay homage to Him and to her—to their
King and to their Queen. Amen.

THE MELLOWING OF OLD AGE
REV. HUGH POPE, O.P.

XVII

THE MELLOWING OF OLD AGE

REV. HUGH POPE, O.P.

THOSE who have any familiarity with the Psalms know what it is to be alternately repelled by them and attracted. A seemingly unintelligible verse throws us back, a sentiment which to our modern minds is revolting jars. But suddenly there comes a verse which almost blinds us so that we realize with somewhat of a gasp what St. Paul meant when he said "the word of God is living and effectual, and more piercing than any two-edged sword, and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit." For these thoughts of the Psalmist have a touch of eternity in them, the "timeless" feature common to all prophecy; they lift us for a brief moment into another sphere and afford us a fleeting glimpse of realities, of those "better things," of those "things of the spirit" for which we all have a certain affinity, especially when put before us by God Himself.

We know well, of course, that the inspiration of the Scriptures does not consist in this which is rather an effect of that inspiration than its essence, something which makes us realize what we believe but do not therefore always grasp, namely, that the Bible is "the Word of God" who thus speaks to man through the voice and the pen of a man.

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Let us take as an illustration from Psalm xci.
The singer says :

“ It is good to give praise to the Lord,
And to sing to thy Name, O most High.”

And he adds the reason :

“ For Thou hast given me, O Lord, a delight in thy
doings ;
And in the works of thy hands I will rejoice.”

Here is something to give us pause. Is it merely what we might call “ a Sunday sentiment,” one of those things we repeat glibly yet never stay to analyse ? Presumably there are men to whom “ nature ” makes no appeal. But it is hard to picture them ; hard to imagine the man for whom a sunset means nothing, to whom the glories of spring or the mellowing of autumn are voiceless. For most men feel these things and go on their way rejoicing. Yet a mere sense of nature is not what the Psalmist refers to here. His thought is far deeper. Theologians tell us that among the Gifts of the Holy Spirit the Gift of Wisdom is distinguished from that of Knowledge in that whereas the former helps us to pass easily and readily from God to the things that God has made, the latter enables to pass conversely from the creature to the Creator. It is this “ gift ” the Psalmist has in mind when he says, “ Thou hast given me a delight in thy doings.” Now by our Baptism we have not only been cleansed from original sin, but have had infused into us Faith, Hope and Charity, and also the Gifts of the

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Holy Spirit. Consequently we can, if we chose, exercise whensoever we desire it the two Gifts just specified. Their exercise is, in effect, what we mean when we speak of seeing all things in God, and God in all things. The glory of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit lies in the fact that the possession of them lifts, their exercise from the realms of the ideal and the impracticable to that of the possible, nay of the feasible, nay more, of the everyday acts of a Christian life.

The Psalmist continues :

O Lord, how great are thy works !
Thy thoughts are exceeding deep.
The senseless man shall not know,
Nor will the fool understand these things.

Once more he is urging us to great thoughts about God. And, as we have seen, these are possible for us ; they should be the natural outcome of our Catholic teaching. If we have to acknowledge that not only are such thoughts not habitual to us, but that they seem hopelessly beyond us, we have to discover where the blame lies. Presumably we shall answer at once that it is due to our environment. We may even, if we are testy about it, urge that we are living in the world and have to adapt ourselves to it ; that the ideas here suggested are intended for those in the cloister, etc. Yet how significantly the Psalmist—or rather the Holy Spirit speaking through him—classes those who think such thoughts among the “ senseless ” and the “ fools.”

After dwelling on the punishment of the wicked,

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men who have no sense for such things, the Psalmist speaks of himself :

My horn shall be exalted like that of the unicorn
(wild ox),
And my old age in plentiful mercy.

The images are strange to our Western minds, natural to the Oriental. He means that if God and the things of God are a joy to him throughout life God will endue him with strength and crown his declining years with His overwhelming mercies. Is it an unworthy hope? After all it is but the counterpart of the picture furnished in Job. One of the many things for which we are not grateful to modern criticism of the Bible is that while insisting that it is the hope of temporal rewards which permeates the Old Testament, they at least imply that these were all that the Saints of the Old Dispensation yearned for. They do not realize that it is under the figures or images of the temporal and the passing that they describe the eternal and the abiding.

The same thought is developed yet further :

The just shall flourish like the palm-tree,
He shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus.

Again the image conveys little or nothing to us. But had we lived in the East we should grasp its full significance. What more exquisitely beautiful than a palm tree in its true glory? Erect, slender, silhouetted against the blue of those skies, the feathery tuft of its fronds waving, crowned in due season with its golden chaplet of dates—a sight once

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seen never forgotten, the very ideal of fruitfulness and beauty combined, that is the Psalmist's ideal of the godly man. Yet it is an incomplete picture and he must needs fill it out: "He shall grow up like the cedar in Libanus." It is not so much now beauty and fruitfulness that he has in mind as solidity and grandeur. His mind goes back to those mighty cedars with their gnarled trunks which he had seen on Mount Lebanon. Colossal, secular, proof against every storm, silent in majesty, even called "the cedars of God" as though they forced man to think of God, even to liken those trees to God Himself.

He passes at once to the thought that springs thence:

They that are planted in the house of the Lord
Shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God.

It is the life of the man of God, of the man whose heart is attuned to God and divine things even in the midst of a world full of distracting cares, the life, in fine, of the man who exercises the gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge.

They shall increase in a fruitful old age,
And shall be well treated that they may shew
That the Lord our God is righteous,
And that there is no iniquity in Him.

What a beautiful picture it is even in this faulty translation! The mellowed old age still "full of sap and green" as another version has it (for "well treated"); still more beautiful if we read with the

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Latin Bible, "And they shall be patient"; the fruitful mellowed old age which by its patience with the ills then inevitable shall declare to all that God is good.

Does it seem very remote from this workaday world, an idealized picture hopeless of realization? If so then how is it that such a picture is painted for us by God our Father? Where should we be were it not for ideals which stimulate us and uplift? We may never attain their full realization, but what does that matter? Truth to tell if we aim at such things we shall be the last ever to dream that we have so attained. Others will recognize it in us, not we. And do you never recognize it in others? Have you no familiar figure in mind whose life as you have watched it, maybe for years, might be described in just the words of this Psalm?

Not the least beautiful feature of the portrait here drawn is the fact that it is a portrait of old age, of the man who has mellowed; in other words of one who has learned by bitter experience, of one who was not always as he is here depicted. Again, whether the Psalm was penned by David himself or not, matters little, indeed we have no reason for thinking it was so; but the fact will always remain that, penned in one of the centuries preceding the coming of Christ, the writer's times can hardly have been other than stormy. If it is to be assigned to the period of the Kings then were the writer's times those of war and bloodshed. If we place it much nearer to the time of Christ then were his days marked by a worldly spirit and a decay of true religion.

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It is not, then, a picture far removed from us ; we are not free to plead that nowadays such ideas are impracticable.

It would be good if we but realized that mostly it is cowardice which makes us take up this attitude whereas “ the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away.”

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